

A History Reclaimed:
*The Society for the Protection of Native
Plants and the Cambridge Plant Club*

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December 2020



Preface

This history of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants grew out of my research for a history of an even older institution – the Cambridge Plant Club – from its founding in 1889, to its merger with the Cambridge Garden Club in 1965. Over those 75 years, the club’s members heard many eminent speakers – some at the beginning of distinguished careers, others at mid-points, and some in much-honored maturity. Although many of the speakers are still known, others who devoted themselves to specialty subjects, are not.

One speaker not well known today was the president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants – Professor Robert T. Jackson, who spoke to the Plant Club in March 1903, two years after the Society’s founding. A highly specialized Harvard paleontologist, Professor Jackson was a plantsman and horticulturist by avocation. Before his prepared remarks, he established a horticultural rapport with his audience by showing an early spring perennial that was in bloom in his Cambridge garden. After the talk, all of the club’s members enrolled their names in the Society, and the Plant Club’s records show that members maintained their interest in the Society, and then in its successor, over the decades that followed.

Intrigued, I was determined to learn more about Professor Jackson, the Society that he served as president for more than 20 years, and the Plant Club’s contributions to the organization. My initial searches revealed that the history of the Society had only been told in the most summary terms. With further sleuthing, I uncovered much more information. When pieced together, this material gives a fuller picture of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants and the men and women who served the cause of plant conservation in the early years of the twentieth century.

Accordingly, this paper presents an expanded history of the Society, profiling not only Professor Jackson and other early plant conservationists. It also adds to the story of how the Society for the Protection of Native Plants (SPNP) became the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants (SPNNEP), soon renamed New England Wild Flower Preservation Society (NEWFPS) and later shortened to the New England Wild Flower Society (NEWFS).

In addition to giving greater credit to early conservationists, such as Professor Jackson, this paper recognizes several others whose contributions have never been properly acknowledged. In the latter category are two women, Mrs. Elizabeth Lejée Perry Richardson and Mrs. Katharine Mitchell Jackson, who each served as presidents of the NEWFPS, but are not included on its presidential list. Both women spoke to the Cambridge Plant Club, so it is a particular pleasure to add them to the history.

Finally, the paper recognizes organizations that deserve historical acknowledgment from Native Plant Trust. Those organizations: The Garden Club of America; the Massachusetts Horticulture Society; and several Boston area garden clubs, including the Chestnut Hill Garden Club and the Noanett Garden Club, as well as the Cambridge Plant Club and its sister club, the Cambridge Garden Club.

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How This Essay Came to Be Written

Present-day members of the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club¹ take pride in the fact that our Plant Club forebears were early supporters of the first plant conservation organization in the United States – the Society for the Protection of Native Plants. The club’s time line of significant events features this item:

March 23, 1903: Professor Robert T. Jackson, the president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, spoke to the Plant Club. Said the club secretary: “...Professor Jackson very kindly talked to us for an hour on ‘The Protection of Native Plants.’ He first showed us a fragrant flower now in bloom in his garden, *Iris reticulata*² – after which he talked to us on the causes of the eradication of our native plants and suggested some ways of preventing it. All present gave their names to be enrolled in the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.” After the talk, Mrs. Jackson joined the Plant Club, so both organizations benefited from an increase in membership.

Who was Professor Robert Tracy Jackson? He was a scion of a Boston family known for producing distinguished doctors. However, in college, he detoured from the expected medical path to the study of paleontology, becoming an expert on mollusks and echinoderms. How did a paleontologist come to serve as the president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants? Though not a botanist, Jackson had developed a singular interest in plants as a boy, creating his own garden at a young age and exhibiting at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. By 1900, Jackson was well-known in Boston’s botanical and horticultural circles, including to a kinswoman who played a key role in the founding of the SPNP.

Professor Jackson and wife and their three young daughters had moved to Cambridge from Boston in 1900. The Plant Club’s members would have taken notice of their new neighbor for Professor Jackson – and Mrs. Jackson – had created an impressive perennial garden around their home at the top of Fayerweather Street.

And who were the members of Professor’s Jackson’s audience on that early spring day in 1903? As suggested by Feature 1, they were interested and well-informed on plant conservation, and eager to support the work of the new society.

Upon reading the report of Professor Jackson’s talk in the Plant Club’s archives, I was curious to know more about the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, and in particular, to see if its records included the names of Plant Club supporters, correspondence relating to donations, requests for leaflets, or alerts identifying areas with plants in need of protection.

My search for records took me to the archives of Native Plant Trust, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Historic New England, the Boston Museum of Science, and various libraries at Harvard. No official records – minutes, member lists, or treasurer’s reports – were to be found. Nevertheless, I ultimately assembled enough information relating to the Society – published leaflets, journal articles, and news items – to piece together the story of its founding, its first two decades, and its subsequent transformation into the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society.

Upon comparing and fact-checking documents, I found that a number contained inaccuracies. Some were trivial, easily corrected errors that involved the organization’s name. Not surprisingly, newspaper and journal editors occasionally stumbled over the long name. Confusion was compounded in 1902 after the founding of a similarly named New York–based plant preservation society. In fact, the founding of that organization – the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America – was partly inspired by the Boston society. Both organizations were covered in the *The Plant World*, which occasionally garbled the very similar names.

Later confusion arose from a succession of name changes. In 1922, the Society for the Protection of Native Plants morphed into the Society for the Preservation of Native Plants, then to the Society for the Preservation of *New England* Plants, before becoming the New England *Wild Flower* Preservation Society, and then New England Wild Flower Society. In April 2019, the Society renamed itself, Native Plant Trust, a choice that harks back to the original.

Feature 1

The Cambridge Plant Club's Early Interest in Native Plants

The Plant Club had already been in existence for 14 years when Professor Jackson spoke to the club. During those years, the club had followed an intense schedule of educational programs, meeting biweekly through 10 months of the year. Its programs ranged from horticulture and botany to conservation and garden design; some talks were given by experts from the ranks of the club's own members and others by outside authorities.

By March 1903, members had enjoyed over 200 programs, and the subject of native plants was a particular focus. Harvard botanists, George L. Goodale and Merritt L. Fernald, who later served as vice presidents of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, had addressed the club twice before Professor Jackson's appearance. Fernald spoke on the influence of altitude on New England flora (1895) and adaptation of New England plants to their surroundings (1900), and Goodale on improving plants in cultivation (1892) and invasive plants (1899).

Independent scholar, Walter Deane, who later served both the Society for the Protection of Native Plants and the New York-based Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers, spoke on native ferns (1890) as well as fresh water plants of the Boston area (1896). Professor Charles S. Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum, an advocate for native species, spoke on the columbine. Francis Sedgwick Child spoke on wild flowers in the border and shady corners, as well as their beauty in lawn – he was ahead of his time. Other speakers, who had “tramped” the towns and countryside, discussed native trees, shrubs and flowers.

In addition to outside experts, members shared their own travels and experiences of native plants – locally, in the vacation spots of New England, and in other parts of the country and on other continents. They read eminent botanist-horticulturist Liberty Hyde Bailey on garden-making.³ Said the club secretary, “He advises making much use of the wild flowers and shrubs. The object of landscaped gardening is to make a picture, and to have the picture look like nature.” At a meeting on wild flowers in 1897, a club member-speaker encouraged members to use their influence in “the different summer places” to prevent people gathering “the wild flowers” in masses. She advised that a small bundle is often more attractive than a large one as it is the quality of the flower not the quantity which attract.

The members of the Plant Club understood the threats to native plants well before the founding of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, and they increasingly felt an urgency for action. In the early 1900s, they became regular readers of a recently founded journal for botanists, amateur and professional, called *The Plant World*, and learned of a new Boston society for the protection of native plants. The Plant Club readers wanted to know more. It was fortuitous that the president of the new society was a Cambridge neighbor, and so the club's minutes record that a speaking invitation was extended in early March 1903.

Records of the Cambridge Plant Club at Radcliffe Institute's Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America

Feature 2

What's in a Name Change?

- Society for the Protection of Native Plants (1901)
- Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants (1922)
- New England Wild Flower Preservation Society (1925)
- New England Wild Flower Society (1970)
- Native Plant Trust (2019)

More serious inaccuracies arose in historical accounts written after the Society for the Protection of Native Plants gave way to the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. These accounts appeared in various places – the yearbook of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the journal of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, as well as in unpublished reminiscences. Errors were subsequently repeated by the New England Wild Flower Society itself, notably in a historical essay that appeared in a 1985 newsletter and then in its 2001 centennial publication.⁴ The mistakes have perpetuated themselves, some in embellished form, in more recent publications.⁵

The histories written in the 1930s and '40s mischaracterized the Society as an association founded by women with no mention of the men who were engaged in the cause. The all-woman image is untrue. Also inaccurate are references to the Society as being “decidedly amateur” and having a “simple start.” On the contrary, the launch of the Society involved concerted, coordinated effort by a group of knowledgeable and dedicated people, men as well as women.

This essay resets the history of the first native plant protection society in America. Although some archival records have yet to be cataloged, it reports the facts as far as can be told at this time.⁶ It introduces, or re-introduces, the women and men who contributed their energy to the Society in its early years, and then to its successor society

into the 1960s. It also gives recognition to the role of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and The Garden Club of America in building the organization that became the New England Wild Flower Society.

The story of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants is inspiring. A succession of conservationists persisted in the cause of native plant protection, one after another. The early plant protectors featured in the following sections would be gratified to see the scope of operations at today's Native Plant Trust, particularly its nursery operations, for they looked to propagation and nursery sales as a means of awaking appreciation and conservation. They would also have approved of the return to *native plant* in their successor organization's name.

Origins of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

Interest in plant collecting began in colonial times and grew in popularity through the nineteenth century. Over the course of the 1800s, this interest was reflected in publications from inexpensive pocket guides to lavishly illustrated volumes. For an example of the latter, Feature 3 shows plates from a quarto by Harvard botanist George L. Goodale and noted illustrator Isaac Sprague, published in 1882. Professor Goodale's book was followed by a mini-boom in popular nature guides.

At the same time, a movement to protect native plants – flowers, ferns, shrubs and trees – thus began to take shape, as various botanists, expert and amateur, saw the fields and forests that they had once known, disappearing with the expansion of towns and cities, the building of new roads, and the pressure to use woodland tracts for logging or for agriculture.⁷ Adding to the pressure, especially near urban areas, were entrepreneur flower-sellers, who collected popular blossoms. Although only the flowers would be sold, the commercial collectors typically pulled up the plants, roots and all. Plant-loving individuals, too, were overzealous in picking flowers and cutting branches of choice shrubs and trees for home decoration. The most avid dug plants for transplant into their own gardens, though the chances of success were slim. And at Christmastime, the fashion for “greening” homes, halls, stores, and churches made pine, laurel, and holly special targets for one and all. Advice to cut less was a difficult message. Indeed, members of the

clergy could be particularly resistant to the suggestion that collecting be limited.

Botanists described the problem in their journals. For laypeople, editorials and letters in newspapers serving the cities and towns of the Northeast, kept up the public conversation.⁸ But what could be done as a practical matter? Some suggested protection by statute – an approach used in Connecticut, but enforcement raised its own issues.

Then, one of the country's leading botanists, Professor William Trelease, the Harvard-trained director of the Missouri Botanical Garden and former president of the Botanical Society of America, proposed a strategy to meet the challenge. At a national scientific meeting in New York in June 1900, he gave a talk, calling for “the protection and preservation in every possible way of our native and natural vegetation.” He urged the formation of local societies for the protection of plants, and he encouraged his scientist peers to support such efforts.⁹

It is fair to speculate that some Harvard botanists – George L. Goodale, Merritt L. Fernald, Benjamin L. Robinson – were in the audience for Professor Trelease's talk. Or if not present in New York, they would have read the speech in the journal *Science* or in *The Plant World*. As for Trelease's recommendation that local societies promote the cause, it would have resonated with the Harvard botanists who knew the Cambridge Plant Club and its seriousness of purpose.

Feature 3

Illustrations, *Wild Flowers of America*, 1882

Two plates from George L. Goodale, M.D., *Wild Flowers of America*, Boston, S.E. Cassino. Professor Goodale's illustrator, Isaac Sprague (1811–1895) was the best known American botanical painter of the day. Beginning as a carriage painter, he found himself drawn to birds and flora. After working as an assistant to Audubon, he collaborated with botanist Asa Gray, for whom he furnished many illustrations, then with George Goodale.



Trailing Arbutus, also known as the Mayflower and Ground Laurel, *Epigaea repens*, Plate XXXVII. Said Goodale: "The species has been grown with a good degree of success by a few experience cultivators, but they appear to agree in regarding it as an exceedingly capricious plant under cultivation."



Wild Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*, Plate I. Of the Wild Columbine, Goodale expressed his opinion that of spring's floral gems, "none can be ranked higher, for a certain grace of bearing and a peculiar delicacy as well as brilliancy in coloring." He also noted, "It takes kindly to cultivation and may be transplanted into the garden."

By coincidence, the impact of the professor's talk was amplified in the general press by the publication of an attractive new wild flower identification book – illustrated in color and wonderfully titled, *Nature's Garden: An Aid to Knowledge of our Wild Flowers and their Insect Visitors*. See Feature 4. A reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote that the book was the kind of a popular flower book "long been wanting in America."¹⁰ Scientists and the wild-flower-loving public were primed to act.

The success of the recently founded Massachusetts Audubon Society gave further force to Professor Trelease's recommendation, showing that a local society could be an effective advocate for change.¹¹ In retrospect, it seems a matter of course that people concerned with endangered plants would come

together to protect vulnerable wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. Professor Trelease can be credited with providing the spark. But, after his talk, the question was, *where* would the first plant protection society be founded?

There were organizational stirrings during the summer of 1900 on Nantucket.¹² But the first association with the objective of protecting native plants over a broad geographical area was founded in Boston. The founding of the Society is documented in a near contemporaneous account – a paper read to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in early 1904 by the Society's president, Professor Robert T. Jackson. According to his paper, the Society for the Protection of Native Plants was inaugurated in 1900 by "a few ladies in Boston."¹³

Feature 4

Cover, *Nature's Garden*, 1900

Published in 1900, this guide book was republished in 1901 as *Wild Flowers: An Aid to Knowledge of our Wild Flowers and their Insect Visitors* (Doubleday, Page & Company) by nature writer Neltje Blanchan. Blanchan's book went through a number of editions and had great educational value for the native plant protection movement.



Unfortunately, Professor Jackson did not give the names of the founding women, except to mention that a woman – Miss Maria E. Carter, the Society's secretary – was in charge of distributing its educational leaflets. Professor Jackson also omitted any mention of the early participation of men in the Society, including how he had been recruited to serve as president. This omission is surprising because, as described in the following pages, Professor Jackson and his colleagues in Harvard's botany department were very much involved in launching the Society.

Jackson's spare account may have been purposeful; the paper that he read to the Horticultural Society was written to make the case for widespread public support. Perhaps, he was concerned that the mention of Harvard professors would suggest that

experts were needed to do the Society's work. Also, perhaps Professor Jackson saw women as the better leaders in a cause that required local advocacy – or “missionary work,” as supporters called it.

Professor Jackson did not give a founding date, but the organizational work seems to have been completed by mid-1901. A one-page announcement circular preserved in a scrapbook at the Native Plant Trust (shown in Feature 5) gives the goals and intentions of the Society, and notes the “approval” of the New England Botanical Club.

And next to the announcement: A news clipping from the *Boston Transcript*, dated July 7, 1901, reported that the Massachusetts Horticultural Society had officially endorsed the object of the Society.

The Society's announcement found its way into a succession of newspaper and journal articles in 1901 and 1902.¹⁴ These articles show the Society's systematic outreach to the various communities – botanical, educational, nature study, commercial, park-planning – where its message would resonate. Multiple articles appeared in newspapers – *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Boston Transcript* (and the *Evening Transcript*), and the *Boston Journal*, as well as in several New York papers. Articles

Feature 5

First Circular of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

**Society for the Protection
of Native Plants**

A number of persons who take a keen interest in wild flowers have united to form a “Society for the Protection of Native Plants.” The objects of this society are to try and do something to check the wholesale destruction to which many of our native plants are exposed,—a destruction often a matter of pure thoughtlessness in the excessive picking of flowers, and unnecessary pulling up of roots, or an extensive collecting of flowers and plants for sale.

It is the intention of the society to publish brief articles, or leaflets, calling the attention of thoughtful people to the matter, and to point out what plants especially need protection and in what way the desired end may be best effected. It is the intention to distribute these leaflets to teachers in our schools, to flower missions and village improvement societies, and in such other places as it may seem that they will be effective.

This movement for the protection of native plants has the approval of the New England Botanical Club, which, as a body, feels keenly the loss or great reduction of many plants once more or less abundant in the neighborhood of our large cities.

For information in regard to the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, or its leaflets, application may be made to

MISS MARIA E. CARTER, Curator of Herbarium,
Boston Society of Natural History,
BERKELEY STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

also appeared in the newspapers of other New England cities – Augusta, Hartford, Providence, and Springfield, as well as in those of the region's smaller towns, and as far as Illinois. Science-oriented journals also provided coverage, notably *Science*, *The American Botanist*, and *Torrey*. The monthly *The Plant World* gave continuing reports. Other specialized journals announced the formation of the Society, including *Park and Cemetery*, *Country Life in America*, *The American Florist: A Weekly Journal for the Trade*, *Forest and Stream*, *American Naturalist*, *The Christian Register*, and *Women's Journal*, and the children's magazine *St. Nicholas*. Undoubtedly, other articles on the Society will come to light as more journals are digitized.

The similar wording of the articles indicates that they were based on the Society's announcement circular, and then its first leaflet, written by Robert

T. Jackson, dated July 1901. The various newspapers and journals described the Society's objectives, along with its plans to publish educational leaflets, the first of which was a list of some of the plants near Boston that were especially in need of protection. The articles directed anyone desiring copies of the Society's leaflets to the corresponding secretary, Miss Maria E. Carter, at the Boston Society of Natural History. See Feature 6.

In 1902, the Society issued a circular that provided more information than the first-year version.¹⁵ Like the inaugural announcement, it described the Society's objects, endorsements, plans to distribute leaflets to teachers in schools, village improvements societies, women's clubs – to “any persons willing to make effective use of them.” But it clarified that anyone might “become a member of the society and receive its leaflets on application to the secretary.”

Feature 6

Boston Society of Natural History, First Home of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

Founded in 1830, the Boston Society of Natural History published a scholarly journal and established a museum to promote the study of natural history. Robert T. Jackson and several other officers of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants were longstanding members of Boston Society of Natural History, and would have been well acquainted with its herbarium curator, Miss Maria E. Carter.

The Society moved to 234 Berkeley Street in the Back Bay in 1864. That impressive building was its home until 1951, when the Society evolved into the Boston Museum of Science and relocated to the present site on Charles River in Cambridge.

“Boston Society of Natural History, Berkeley Street, ca. 1915,” Collection of Boston Pictorial Archives, Boston Public Library.



The Society's organizers felt that it was very important to have *free* membership in order to attract teachers and others who ought not to pay fees.¹⁶ The plan was that the contributions of "sustaining members," giving \$1 or more, would cover printing costs and other expenses.

The "Organization for 1902" is also notable because it lists the Society's officers, including four Cantabrigians:

Honorary President

Mrs. Asa Gray, Cambridge

President

Robert T. Jackson, Cambridge

Vice Presidents

Benjamin L. Robinson, Cambridge

Frank A. Hill, State Board of Education,
State House, Boston [Cambridge resident]

Miss Amy Folsom, Boston

Treasurer

Miss Margaret Warren, Dedham

Secretary

Miss Maria E. Carter, Boston Society of
Natural History, Boston

The list shows that the leadership of the society included women and men. Like the Massachusetts Audubon Society, which was also founded by women, the Society's first president was a man recognized for his expertise. A Harvard scientist and well-connected Bostonian, Professor Jackson was known as an avid horticulturist greatly interested in native plants. See Feature 7.

Certainly Jackson was uniquely qualified to serve as the Society's president, but how did he come to be recruited to the position? Likely because Miss Folsom and Professor Jackson were related – Miss Folsom's mother was a Jackson.¹⁷ As a cousin, Miss Folsom would have been aware of Jackson's long-standing interest in native plants.

Though the Society's president was a man, it is gratifying to learn that the honorary president was a woman – Mrs. Asa Gray (née Jane Lathrop Loring), who had been a recognized companion in her famous husband's botanical work and then an organizer of his papers following his death in 1888.¹⁸

It was a coup to gain the support of Professor Benjamin L. Robinson as a vice president. Robinson was the curator of the Gray Herbarium, and had recently been appointed the Asa Gray Professor of Systematic Botany, as well as the editor of the New England Botanical Club's journal *Rhodora*. The Gray Herbarium was one of the world's leading centers of botanical research, and for the new society to be supported by its director was a great thing.

The support of the secretary of the State Board of Education, the Hon. Frank A. Hill, Litt.D., was also impressive.¹⁹ His position as a vice president signaled that the Society would have an entrée to the Massachusetts schools, and the organization viewed teachers as crucial allies in their campaign. As a former head master of the English High School in Cambridge, and later of the Mechanic Arts High School in Boston, the Hon. Secretary Hill had a wealth of connections to use in promoting the cause of the Society.

The officer list reported in the Unitarian journal also gives us the names of three women. One of them, Maria E. Carter, the Society's secretary, was a native plant expert and curator of the herbarium at the Boston Society of Natural History. Miss Carter's interest in wild flowers was of long standing, and can be documented back to the 1860s, when she began to exhibit native plants at Massachusetts Horticultural Society shows.²⁰

The two other women were Miss Amy Folsom, one of the Society's three vice presidents, and Miss Margaret Warren, the treasurer. Both Miss Folsom and Miss Warren were associated with various charitable causes, but not as active members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society or exhibitors in its shows.

An aside regarding Amy Folsom: In later accounts, Miss Folsom was credited as "the" founder of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, based on a personal note.²¹ Writing 22 years after the fact, Miss Folsom stated that it was she who had the idea of a society for plants – like the Audubon Society – with her maternal aunt Miss Marion Jackson, and that later [in the winter of 1900–1901] "a small group came together in Boston." Miss Folsom also stated that, following that meeting, she had been away for more than a year, and could offer no first-hand knowledge of the efforts of the women during that period of absence. Thanks to correspondence preserved in scrapbook in the Society's archives, the name of at least one of those women is known – that of Miss Frances R. Morse, who was a cousin of Miss Folsom and her aunt.²²

Although the full list of the women who organized the Society in its first year is unknown, their publicity notices took care to say that the Society was endorsed by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the New England Botanical Club. They also communicated that the Society was not meant to be a clubby academic group, meeting over dinners, but an organization that aimed to recruit an expanding geographical network of members who would inform the public on the need to protect native plants.

Robert Tracy Jackson, First President of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

Robert Tracy Jackson (1861–1948) was born into a prominent New England family, known for producing doctors.²³ Jackson's great-uncle, Dr. James Jackson, was associated with the founding of both the Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital. Jackson's father was a distinguished physician, a professor of anatomy and pathology, as well as dean of Harvard Medical School. Jackson's older brother became a physician, and Jackson seemed destined to follow a medical path. However, he went in a more specialized research direction. Still, his career choice – paleontology – had an anatomical orientation. Indeed, Jackson's interest in evolutionary paleontology likely grew out of the time that he had spent with his father among the teratological exhibits in the Warren Anatomical Museum.

Jackson's early schooling was not reported in any bibliographic notes, though it is known that he enjoyed the advantage of travel with his father. In 1884, he graduated from Harvard's Lawrence Scientific School, where he studied with geologist Nathaniel S. Shaler and zoologist-paleontologist Alpheus Hyatt. He received a doctorate in 1889, and three years later, joined the paleontology faculty – teaching and curating. Jackson soon showed a preference for museum work, a preference that was made possible by family means. A memorial writer said that Jackson was “an ideal curator with infinite patience and great ingenuity when it came to developing practical methods for labelling and arranging.”²⁴ As a teacher, he was said to have given unstintingly to students who shared his interests.

In the mid-1890s, Jackson began to study mollusks and echinoderms, a subject that led him to travel widely and that would be his principal research concern for the rest of his life. His writings, including a “monumental” *Phylogeny of the Echini*, published in 1912, testifies to a great capacity to study a subject in detail. Jackson served as Curator of Fossil Echinoderms at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology from 1911 to 1939; becoming emeritus curator after “retiring.”

As a paleontologist, Jackson was elected to fellowship in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1895). He was also a member of the Boston Society of Natural History (vice president in 1915), the American Society of Naturalists, the Geological Society of America, and the Paleontological Society (president in 1919).

Though Jackson was dedicated to his paleontological work, botany was a fascination. In the late 1890s, Jackson undertook a project that combined the botanical and the paleontological – a report on the collection of fossil plants in the Botanical Museum at Harvard.

His writings on plants suggest that if he had not felt the pull of paleontology, Jackson might have developed a specialty that combined botany and horticulture – somewhat like the famed Liberty Hyde Bailey.

While most people don't discover the joy of gardening until middle age, Jackson was unusual in that he developed a passion for horticulture as a boy. His first garden was at his childhood home in Dorchester, then still reminiscent of an 18th-century village. Jackson recalled a place of pasture, farms and gardens – a landscape that also recalled the era of colonial estates.

Jackson's early love of horticulture developed under the influence of a neighbor – a singular gardener named John Richardson (1798–1887).²⁵ The young Jackson was fascinated by Richardson's quest to produce superior varieties of the peony, his favorite flower.

The influence of Mr. Richardson is related in an essay that Jackson wrote for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1904. Said Jackson, “It was my privilege to know Mr. John Richardson intimately from my early childhood, he being an old friend and

neighbor of my father's.” Mr. Richardson's house, a colonial mansion, was located at the Five Corners, the junction of Boston, Cottage and Pond Streets – the garden and orchard as a whole about three acres in extent.²⁶

The essay is packed with information about Richardson's garden, and his various favored plants; it is also a poignant portrayal of the influence that an older person can have on an observant child. Jackson found listening to his elders' conversations on the cultivation of plants a “delightful experience.”

Jackson provided a lengthy description of the garden that is a contribution to local landscape history. But a paragraph on horticulture gives a sense of the precocious development of Jackson's appreciation for gardens and gardeners.²⁷

Mr. Richardson had a perfect passion for horticulture and every plant in his garden that he loved so well was a real personality to him. His absorption in this interest lasted to the very end, for visiting him in his short illness a few days before his death, the old subject was brought up just the same. It was a great treat to the horticulturist to visit his garden, for in it were large numbers of rare as well as common plants, and choice seedlings, all grown to a perfection that in itself gives to the experience

Continued on next page



View of Mr. Richardson's garden showing dahlias, ismenes, iris sibirica and a peony, in Robert Tracy Jackson, “Mr. Richardson, His House and Garden” Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1904, Part I, p. 172

almost or quite as much pleasure as qualities of rareness or novelty. A walk with him about the garden meant a lingering at every step to consider the merits, the history or some cultural point in regard to the plants that were as his children. His taste was refined and exceptionally critical, so that a plant to meet his approval must have real merits, his commendation was a guarantee of excellence. The love of gardening was born with him, when a child he used to plant date seeds in his father's yard in Boston, and the fascination of raising plants from seed and thus producing new and improved varieties always clung to him. By this means he raised many choice dahlias, phloxes, deutzias and especially peonies but it was not only these, everything that came to hand he tried to raise from seed...

Jackson recorded the various plants that were favorites of Richardson and the succession of bloom – masses of spring bulbs; tigridias (“ablaze” in late summer with hundreds of blooms of red, yellow, orange and white varieties, though always with the red center”); dahlias (“ablaze with choice blooms of rich and delicate colors” in autumn); and more (perennial rocket, auriculas, candytuft; phlox, iris, deutzia (Jackson named a choice double *Deutzia crenata* in Richardson's honor); and Christmas rose.

Jackson's description of Mr. Richardson's peonies provided an important record for future generations of peony growers. Under Richardson's tutelage, Jackson learned to appraise fine upright habit of growth and superior size without exception.”²⁸ Jackson noted the *Paeonia albiflora* varieties, or Chinese peonies, were Richardson's specialty, though in his later years, he only had some 40 plants. Still, according to Jackson, Richardson “had his unbloomed seedlings, ‘candidate for fame,’ as he called them with a twinkle in his eye.” After Richardson's death, Jackson took some seventy-five unbloomed seedlings from the garden. And Jackson was an excellent custodian, winning more awards (and increased fame for Richardson). And many years later after Jackson's death, his peony seedlings were turned over to the Arnold Arboretum.

Thanks to Mr. Richardson, Jackson's interest in horticulture can be traced through the records of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society²⁹ As a boy, Jackson exhibited plants at the Society. In 1884, he was elected to a life membership, and began to serve on a plant

and flower committee. In the *Transactions* for that year, there is a paper entitled “Garden of Robert T. Jackson,” with a long list of plants, for which he was awarded the first prize of \$20 for the best collection of hardy biennial and perennial plants in this vicinity.³⁰

Jackson's interest in wild flowers also came early. In 1884, he published a paper entitled “Protection of Alpine Plants” [not signed] in *Science*.³¹ His interest in wild flowers is also documented in the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's *Transactions* for 1885 and 1886. According to a report entitled “Bulbs and Tubers for Out-Door Culture” Jackson “propagated *Trillium grandiflorum* by division of the root; it makes but little seed. He succeeds with *T. erythrocarpum* in moderate shade with leaf-mould and cow manure.”³² While a doctoral student, Jackson found time to publish a three-part article, “Cultivation of Native Ferns,” for *Garden and Forest*.³³

Jackson gained a partner in the garden in 1889, when he married Miss Fanny Esther Roberts (1863–1947). The Jacksons lived in the Back Bay for the first decade of their marriage, one which saw the birth of three daughters.³⁴ Jackson was a devoted husband and father, and later in life, a proud grandfather.

During the winter of 1899–1900, the Jacksons moved to Cambridge – one year before the founding of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants. The scope for a garden at 9 Fayerweather Street [now 31–33] must have delighted Jackson. He transferred his plants from Dorchester, including his rare Richardson peonies, and they thrived. On June 22, 1904, the MHS's Committee on Gardens (chaired by Oakes Ames) visited Professor Jackson's Cambridge garden.³⁵ The garden was described as “a good example for the treatment of a suburban estate of less than twenty thousand square feet.” The committee's report noted 125 varieties of peonies, among them 18 of the notable Richardson seedlings.

The first decade of the 1900s was a busy period for Jackson. He began serving as the president of the new Society for the Protection of Native Plants. He wrote its Leaflet No. 1, and also reviewed a paper on the extinct flora of North America. He also took a leadership position with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, elected in November 1904 to a two-year term as vice president.³⁶ In addition to the paper on John Richardson's garden, Jackson published a paper, “Notes on the Cultivation of Peonies,” for the Society.³⁷



Cambridge home of Robert T. Jackson at 9 Fayerweather Street [now numbered 31–33], ca. 1875. During Jackson's tenure, the garden was known for its peonies and other choice perennials. *Historic New England*.

In 1911, following the death of their youngest daughter, the Jacksons moved to Peterborough, New Hampshire, a retreat favored by a number of Cambridge Plant Club members, particularly the ornithologists. From that time, the Jacksons were associated with various addresses in Boston, but there are no references to gardens. The choice material from the Cambridge garden was transferred to Peterborough. With a larger garden, Jackson offered irises and peonies for sale, and his seedlings were advertised in the *Bulletin of The GCA*.

Jackson's last public native plant talk was given at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's great wild flower exhibition in May 1922. But even after the care of the Society passed to Mrs. Crosby, Professor Jackson kept an eye out for rare native plants.

One plant from Jackson's garden found fame in the *Horticulture* magazine of July 15, 1930.³⁸ In a feature with a photograph, Jackson recorded a *Cypripedium pubescens* long in cultivation. According to Jackson, he had collected the plant in New York State on the borders of Lake George in 1883, and transplanted it to his garden in Dorchester, a fact that was documented in the *Transactions* of Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the year.³⁹ Jackson noted that he had transferred the choice plant from Dorchester to his garden in Cambridge around 1900, and moved it to Peterborough in 1911. Jackson moved it once more in his Peterborough garden. Therefore, the plant in cultivation for 47 years, had been transplanted four times, and presumably continued in Jackson's garden until his death in 1948, and perhaps it still blooms there.



A Remarkable Plant of *Cypripedium pubescens*

A *Cypripedium* Long in Cultivation

I HAVE in my garden in Peterborough, N. H., a plant of *Cypripedium pubescens* that has been so long in successful cultivation it has awakened considerable interest in those who have seen it. It seems that some notice of it is worth recording.

I collected the plant in New York State on the borders of Lake George in 1883. It was then planted in my garden in Dorchester and is recorded in an account and list of the plants growing in my garden, published in the Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the year 1884, Part II, 1885, p. 277-287. Later, about 1900, on moving to Cambridge it was transferred to my garden there. Again, moving to Peterborough, N. H., in 1911, it was a second time transplanted and is still flourishing as indicated by the accompanying illustration from a photograph which was taken on May 22 of this year. The plant has therefore been in cultivation for 47 years.

There were 46 blooms on the plant this year and the tallest leaves rise to the height of 18 inches. I have cultivated a considerable number of our native orchids but no other species has succeeded as well as this *Cypripedium pubescens*. As regards cultivation, there is a certain amount of leaf-mold dug into the soil and the plant is growing in such a position that it receives partial shade from an apple tree to the south of it. In winter it is protected by a light covering of pine boughs.

—Robert Tracy Jackson.

Peterborough, N. H.

As gardener, Jackson was a pioneer in showing that cultivating native plants in the garden could be a key to preventing destructive collection in the wild.

Gardens can be ephemeral, so it is a happy note that there is still a garden at Jackson's Peterborough property. After his death in 1948, the property was subsequently owned and developed by a succession of avid gardeners, including a later president of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society, and in 1999, the garden was documented for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Gardens.

Jackson photographed the Cypripedium on May 22, 1930, a year in which it produced 46 blooms and the tallest leaves measuring 18 inches. Jackson noted that he had cultivated a considerable number of native orchids, but that no other species had succeeded as well as this Cypripedium pubescens. Regarding its care, Jackson stated that he dug a "certain amount of leaf-mold" into the soil, that the plant received partial shade from an apple tree south of it, and protection from a light covering of pine boughs in the winter.

A fitting close to this biographical note is a report submitted by Jackson to the November 1930 issue of *Rhodora* is:⁴⁰

AN EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE ONOCLEA SENSIBILIS. – On the 11th of August, 1929, I found on Pine St., Peterborough, New Hampshire, an exceptionally large *Onoclea sensibilis* Linn. that seems worth recording. The plant was in a damp situation, and growing out from an Arbor Vitae hedge, which doubtless in part caused the elongation of the fronds. A sterile frond, from the base of the stalk to the tip of the frond, measured 51¼ inches in length, the frond at the broadest part near the base measured 16½ inches in length. Several other fronds on the same plant were of nearly or quite the same dimensions.

In Eaton's *Ferns of North America* it is recorded of the sensitive fern that the tallest fronds are often fully three feet in height. This height is much exceeded by the specimen here cited.

– ROBERT TRACY JACKSON,
Peterborough, New Hampshire.

Thanks to Professor Robinson of the Gray Herbarium, one of the vice presidents of the organization, we have a good early account of the new society in the journal *Rhodora*.⁴¹ Writing in mid-1902, Robinson reported that the Society had “already surpassed the hopes of its founders in the breadth of its influence and the extent of interest and sympathy, which it has aroused.” According to Robinson, the group had members in 15 states plus Canada, and had distributed thousands of leaflets – “moderate in tone and convincing in their appeal” – to libraries, teachers, members of botanical and horticultural societies, village improvement associations, park commissioners, flower missions,⁴² and “especially” to school children, supportive editorials, other associations formed with the same objective. As a scientist, he encouraged the Society's supporters to share information regarding “the places and plants requiring attention.”

The new society garnered considerable publicity for its conservation message in the local newspapers. In the spring of 1903, the editor of the *Cambridge Chronicle*⁴³ lauded the leaders of the Society, Mrs. Asa Gray and Professor Jackson. The editor wrote:

There is nothing on earth more beautiful than the wild flowers with which America has been so abundantly blessed by nature. But many thoughtless people who admire these same beauties seem to have the idea that the best method of expressing their appreciation is by plucking the flowers up by the roots, a habit which often results in the destruction of the whole species. It is the plan of this organization of nature lovers to publish brief articles from time to time calling people's attention to the necessity for more care in the handling of these flowers, and giving practical hints as to the best methods of preserving them. May it have all the success in its endeavors that its object entitles it to.

The Boston newspapers also continued to lend their editorial voices to the cause of protecting wild flowers and native plants, and provided the Society with publicity as their leaflets were published.⁴⁴

Feature 8

Harvard Botanic Garden Home of Mrs. Asa Gray House, Honorary President of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

Mrs. Asa Gray (née Jane Loring) was 80 when she became the honorary president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants. She lived in the house on the grounds of the Harvard Botanic

Garden from her marriage in 1848 until her death in 1909. The house is on the left, with the Gray Herbarium in the center, and Greenhouses on the right, 1890, Archives of the Gray Herbarium.



Feature 9

Gray Herbarium at Harvard, Academic Home to Three Vice Presidents of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

At the time of the founding of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, the Gray Herbarium was one of the centers of the botanical universe. Three of its directors served as vice presidents of the Society – Professors

Benjamin L. Robinson, Merritt L. Fernald, and George L. Goodale. The photograph shows Professor Goodale in a laboratory, ca. 1880 (Archives of the Gray Herbarium).



The Society's first leaflet published during the summer of 1901 by Robert T. Jackson had included a list of plants in need of protection: Of particular: *Epigaea repens* (trailing arbutus or mayflower); *Gentianopsis crinita* (fringed gentian); *Sabatia* species (rose genetians); *Cypridedium acaule* (pink ladyslipper); and the native evergreen shrub, *Kalmia latifolia*, then a favorite winter decoration. At the same time, the piece listed plants found in abundance that were not a matter of concern. Jackson's leaflet generated a number of newspaper articles, and headlines – "The Extinction of Wild Flowers" and "Too Much Laurel Is Cut" – added urgency to the message of the Society's literature.

Coverage of the organization's efforts was also directed a female audience through women's club bulletins.⁴⁵ And throughout the Society's early years, *The Plant World* could be depended upon for exceptional coverage. Of course, the Society's own leaflets – 40,000 distributed between the 1903 and 1904 annual meetings – reinforced articles in the press.

As noted above, Professor Jackson's paper to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in March 1904 described the need for the protection of native plants. It did so in greater detail than Professor Robinson's earlier paper in *Rhodora*. Jackson also reported that the Society for the Protection of Native Plants had been spreading information through its leaflets, with over 600 members and affiliations with 51 schools in Massachusetts, as well as schools, libraries and village improvement societies in other part of the country. Jackson's talk was widely covered, giving the Society excellent publicity.⁴⁶ Later in 1904, Jackson reprised his talk before a conference held by improvement societies and allied organizations of Massachusetts.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the Society for the Protection of Native Plants was bolstered by the efforts of like-minded preservationists in New York.

First Annual Report, Society for the Protection of Native Plants

Professor Robinson gave a synopsis of the Society's aims. He noted that the protection of wild flowers in the vicinity of large and growing cities was beyond the power and hopes of the Society. The damage, due less to flower pickers, than to "perfected drainage, the paving of streets, the extension of squalid suburbs, the tramp of many feet, the demoralizing influences of dust and coal smoke, the dumping of rubbish, and finally the introduction of foreign weeds." Regarding "any attractive bits of vegetation still lingering in the immediate vicinity of our cities," Robinson said that he could "only commend them to the legal protection of park-commissioners, urging upon these officials the superior beauty of the wild and natural in comparison with any studied arrangement of exotic shrubs."

Robinson argued that the focus should be on areas where the Society might find success in enlightening and diminishing the demand – informing through newspapers and leaflets. According to Robinson, it "was well out from the shadow of the brick and mortar of our great cities, where native plants were being destroyed so needlessly, that the protection was needed." He cited the summer resorts of the White Mountains, Adirondacks, northern Michigan, Wisconsin, Cape Cod, Cape Ann, country locales

where "beautiful patches of mountain laurel and holly are being literally hacked to pieces to furnish the quickly passing decorations of winter balls, city weddings and church festivities." As for Cape Cod, Robinson lamented "bales of trailing arbutus (roots and all), which brought to the city, yield the innumerable little bunches of flowers purchased on the streets by persons who never suspect the ruthless destruction wrought by this trade."

Finally, Robinson decried the destruction of trees such as the *Magnolia glauca* by transplanting to lawns of country residences – "a practice the more deplorable since rarely accomplished with success." Better, said Robinson, to procure such plants from nurserymen who grow the desired plants in soil and environment more nearly approaching that in which the plants will be placed.

With this recommendation, Professor Robinson thus anticipated the work of the Native Plant Trust since the acquisition of Garden in the Woods.

– B.L. Robinson, "The Protection of Our Native Flora," *Rhodora*, Vol. 4, No. 43 (July 1902): 139–142.

Another Organization Is Founded and Joins in the Work of Plant Protection

The turn of the century sparked a determination to protect native plants in New York as well as in Boston. Soon after the 1901 announcement of the founding of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, the New York Botanical Garden received a gift of \$3,000 from sisters Olivia and Caroline Stokes for a native plant protection fund, and its board was given latitude to determine how the money would be spent.⁴⁸ The board acted quickly to establish an annual contest with monetary prizes for essays that would encourage a public dialogue regarding the preservation of native plants.

The very first essays submitted for the Stokes Prize (named in honor of the donors) furnished the inspiration for a new society, and in 1902, a portion of the fund was earmarked for the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.⁴⁹ Based at the New York Botanical Garden, the society's guiding spirit was botanist Elizabeth Gertrude Knight Britton, who had been instrumental in the creation of the Botanical Garden a decade before.

On April 23, 1902, the New York-based Society was inaugurated – with flare – by an illustrated lecture at the Smithsonian's United States National Museum. That lecture, entitled "Some Wild Flowers in Need of Preservation," was followed by lectures at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, the Academy of Sciences in Philadelphia, and a public meeting in Pittsburgh in connection with the sessions of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Thanks to Mrs. Britton, the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America quickly established a publishing relationship with *The Plant World*. As the "Official Organ" of the Society, the journal published the Stokes Prize papers, and other appealing and informative pieces – about the relationship of native plants to birds and insects, wild flowers beyond New York (from the Midwestern prairies to the Pacific), forest policy, and particular plants. Thanks also to Mrs. Britton, some of the Society's articles, e.g., the Stokes essays, were reprinted in the *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*.

First Stokes Prize-Winning Plant Preservation Essays, 1902

In December 1901, an editorial in *The Plant World* announced that the scientific directors of the New York Botanical Garden had decided to use the income from the Caroline and Olivia Phelps Stokes Fund for the Preservation of Native Plants to offer three prizes for the best essays on plant preservation. The first prize, \$50; second prize, \$30; and third prize, \$20. Here are the first summaries of the three prize-winning essays.

April 1902

The first prize was won by F.H. Knowlton, U.S. National Museum and an editor of *The Plant World* for his essay, "Suggestion for the Preservation of Our Native Plants."⁵⁰ Written before the founding of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America, Dr. Knowlton described the dimensions of the problem and advocated for a national society, "aiming to do for plants what the Audubon Society has so well done for our birds." He continued, "This, of course, should be in no wise a technical botanical society, but an organization adapted especially to children, young people and nature-lovers in general."

May 1902

The second prize went to Cora H. Clarke, Boston botanist and entomologist, for an essay entitled, "New Missionary Work."⁵¹ Miss Clarke cited the work of "our" Society for the Protection of Native Plants in her paper, including its leaflet No. 1, written by Robert T. Jackson with a list of plants in need of protection. She diagnosed the problem as follows: "The chief danger that menaces our native plants is from those who cut or dig them in quantity to sell in the cities." She observed that the once-plentiful holly and mountain laurel, both slow-growing shrubs, particularly the "poor laurel" has to undergo two attacks

annually, one for the flowers in summer and one for the evergreen leaves at Christmas time." As for native evergreen ferns, forest – "greenhouse men" – had nearly eradicated them from the city environs. (Harvard's Professor Robinson had also referred to the "astonishing quantities" of mountain laurel, holly, and other Christmas greens brought to cities during the winter season.)

She then recommended a three-pronged protection effort:

- Legislation to protect particular species
- Moral suasion by means of articles in papers and magazines, expelling the dangers threatening native flora, and calling upon people not to buy certain species.
- Education, which goes deeply into the subject, and endeavors to teach both children and adults, by lectures, lessons and talk, the beauty and worth of our native flora, the duty of preserving it and the best way to enjoy it.

Can we not persuade those who go out to gather flowers that a few blossoms showing the graceful outline and contrasting leaves are really more pleasing to the eye than a great crowded bunch? Surely, after all these decades of Japanese art, we ought to have a generation growing up that has learned to appreciate the beauty of a single spray, be it rose, bamboo or pine, and the eye thus trained will soon learn that those able to go to see the flowers in their natural surroundings will care but little for a bunch in a vase. For the pleasure of those unable to ramble in wood or meadow let us bring home a few of the beauties – moss, grass, sedge, fungus, fern and flower, and arranged them as far as possible to imitate their natural

surroundings – Yet the columbine in a vase begins to compare with the graceful beauty of a columbine nodding on a rocky ledge?

June 1902

The third prize went to A.J. Grout, Columbia University biologist who was an expert in mosses. His essay, "How Shall Our Wild Flowers Be Preserved?"⁵² described the problem thus:

"The problem of the preservation of our wild flowers is most acute in the vicinity of our towns and cities, for it is here that flowers suffer most from indiscriminate gathering."

In addition, Grout outlined the concern in rural areas based on three situations: gathering of particularly attractive wild flowers for city markets; collectors' searches for some rare plants; and the clearing of forest areas or the draining and clearing of swamps for economic reasons, changing conditions necessary for many native plants.

Grout called for legislation by locality; public education; incorporating public parks into development (leaving such parks wild so that landscape gardener cannot "improve native plants out of existence"); support for forestry associations; developing economical substitutes for wood pulp. Regarding the problem of wild flower picking, Grout wrote there "is a right way and a wrong way to pick flowers," and advocated public leaflets to spread this knowledge

The problem of the cutting woodland to make way for expanding farms – threatening indigenous flora – was another side of the problem, perhaps even more difficult.

The publication of the Stokes prize essays and other articles, plus an "extensive distribution" of printed matter (including for school children) and an ambitious schedule of lectures, expanded general interest in the preservation of native plants. The new society thus articulated the dimensions of the issue very clearly and showed how awareness of the problem might go some way in addressing it.

The New York and Boston plant protection societies encouraged each other's work. Still, it was a difficult message. Some of the writing of the plant

protectionists had a critical sound. Not everyone favored calls for the enactment of stringent laws. What could be said to a person who deemed a "Please Do Not Pick the Wild Flowers" sign to be the height of selfishness? There were reports of opposition from ministers determined to "green" their churches at Christmas. As for the flower-gatherers who raked bales of trailing arbutus (roots and all), they were often immigrants trying to make a living, selling little bunches on city streets. And then there was the case of a grieving mother who

was arrested after picking wild flowers in a swamp to place on the grave of her young son.⁵³

But overall, the message of the two societies was well received. With the founding of the New York society and its various branches, the Society for

the Protection of Native Plants had the support of an active sister organization, one connected with a journal that had a wide readership (including the members of the Cambridge Plant Club) as well as with the journal of the New York Botanical Garden.

Feature 12

Poster, Society for the Protection of Native Plants

PROTECT THE NATIVE PLANTS

Many attractive flowering plants, ferns, etc., in the neighborhood of towns and summer resorts, are in serious danger of local extermination or reduction to relative rarity. This condition already exists in many places, and is much to be deplored, as it takes away one of the great charms of wood and field.

How may this danger be averted? Pick only a few flowers instead of a large quantity, thus giving an opportunity for seeds to develop and perpetuate the species.

A few flowers skillfully arranged are much more attractive and decorative than masses bunched together. In picking flowers do not pull up the roots of plants. Avoid purchasing wild flowers in the streets and elsewhere, thus checking the incentive to collecting for sale, which in some cases has assumed very large proportions.

Poster text reproduced in *The Plant World* (August 1903): 190. The *Plant World* publicized the work of both the Society for the Protection of Native Plants and the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.

Feature 13

Photograph, *Trillium erythrocarpum* by Edwin Hale Lincoln

The botanical photographs of Edwin Hale Lincoln were an important contribution to the wild flower protection movement. A drummer in the Civil War, Lincoln (1848–1918), later became a noted photographer. He produced architectural and nautical images, but his passion was for natural flora. In 1914, he self-published "Wildflowers of New England," the product of 20 years' study, with 400 plates in eight volumes. Two other botanical-inspired works were "Orchids of the North Eastern United States" and "Trees." Lincoln's glass plate and film negative collection (ca. 1890–1935) is owned by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.



Campaigning to Protect Native Plants, 1901–1921

Thanks to its cordial relationship with the New York-based wild flower preservation society, there are good accounts of the early annual meetings of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants in *The Plant World*. Articles in the journal document the growth of the movement. For example, in 1905, membership increased over the previous year as follows:⁵⁴

Members, 909; village improvement societies, 153; other organizations, 273
Sustaining members – 101 (1905); 75 (1904)
Local secretaries – 80 (1905); 43 (1904)
States represented – 32 (1905); 25 (1904) plus the District of Columbia and two foreign countries
Mailing list – 1,335 (1905); 627 (1904)

The report also gives the scale of the Society's leafletting effort. As of 1905, some 71,000 leaflets had been distributed; 28,000 slips; and 600 cloth posters. This material was sent to "hundreds" of hotels and boarding houses, colleges, private and public schools, libraries, women's clubs, secretaries of village improvement and Audubon societies, shops, churches, publishing houses, and individuals. Autumn appeals to clergymen, shopkeepers, women's clubs, and to persons likely to give large entertainments called attention to the "destruction of the mountain laurel through its excessive use for decoration."

Probably the best publicity was provided by the leaflets that the Society distributed in quantity. Issued from 1901 until 1921, they were penned by various authors, some quite well known. As such, the leaflets were designed to attract readers.

The leaflets had a receptive audience with the Cambridge Plant Club. For example, a club record book reports the reading of one of the Society's leaflets [Leaflet No. 10] at a meeting in March 1906. [The reader was Mrs. Norton Folsom, the sister-in-law of Amy Folsom's father, George McKean Folsom.] The message for lovers of native plants was summarized: "moderation, care in picking, judgement and in some cases total abstinence."

For the 1906 annual meeting, the Society's corresponding secretary, Margaret E. Allen, provided a detailed report.⁵⁵ The meeting opened with an address by Merritt L. Fernald of the Gray Herbarium. Professor Fernald presented key facts on the flora of the country. He noted that rapid changes – from the building of towns and highways and the conversion of woodland to farm land – could not be influenced. He explained the tragedy – when woodlands disappear, the delicate wild flowers which flourish in a soil rich in leaf-mold are sure to disappear. "As soon as we dry out the humus, whether by burning, cutting out or building, these somewhat fastidious plants have to go, with no hope of return." Though other natives that like open spaces – golden-rod and aster – can spread rapidly, he noted that they are more apt to be "coarse and showy." And even these vigorous plants, near towns, are apt to be crowded out by "the coarser and more vigorous roadside plants of Europe." Professor Fernald noted that over 600 of them, "familiarly known as weeds, are now among our wild plants, and at no very distant time they will cover the continent. Already, over large tracts of our prairie region, the native flora is vanishing, or has actually vanished, and the wild flowers are of the weed-like type." His concluding plea: that the members of the Society "encourage the setting

apart, for the public, of spots of woodland, where natural conditions can be maintained." This theme was again sounded in Leaflet No. 15.

Regarding the work of the Society, the corresponding secretary reported that a hundred or more persons were acting as secretaries in different localities, distributing leaflets and offering suggestions, and read from some of their letters. Membership remained free, and members were encouraged to recommend members, including sustaining members who could contribute funds. In the spring and summer leaflets and posters were sent – to schools, camps, boarding houses, and resorts. In the fall, letters were sent to clergymen, shopkeepers and persons likely to give large entertainments – these regarding the use of laurel and other evergreens for decoration. The literature was also sent to women's clubs and village improvement societies. Publishers included slips about the Society in nature books and posters in railroad stations and other public places. In arbutus localities, the Society distributed a poster printed on cotton.

The officer lists for 1903–1905 are not available, but the 1906 list showed that several personnel changes had taken place in the first years. Comparing the 1902 and 1906 lists, one sees new vice presidents, a change in the treasurer, and a division of secretarial responsibilities.

Honorary President

Mrs. Asa Gray [Cambridge]

President

Robert T. Jackson, Cambridge

Vice Presidents

Benjamin L. Robinson, Cambridge

George L. Goodale, Cambridge

Merritt H. [sic] Fernald, Cambridge

George H. Martin, State Board of Education, Boston

Treasurer

Miss Amy Folsom, 88 Marlborough Street, Boston

Secretary

Miss Maria E. Carter, Boston Society of Natural History, Boston

Corresponding Secretary

Miss Margaret E. Allen, 12 Marlborough Street, Boston

Mrs. Gray and Professor Jackson remained as the Society's leaders. Professor Robinson was joined by two Harvard colleagues, Professors Fernald and Goodale. The Society was fortunate to have the support of both. Fisher Professor of Natural History, George L. Goodale (1839–1923) was the director

Feature 14

Leaflets of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, 1901–1921

- No. 1 – “Society for the Protection of Native Plants” (hand dated, July 20, 1901, and publicized in two issues of *The Plant World*) by Robert T. Jackson
- No. 2 – Untitled by George L. Goodale (on the “soundness of the appeal to protect the rarer flowers”) (hand dated, November 25, 1901)
- No. 3 – “A Plea for the Protection of Our Ferns” by George E. Davenport⁵⁶ (hand dated November 25, 1901)
- No. 4 – “To Nature-Study Teachers” (unsigned, hand-dated, September 10, 1902, printed date 1902)
- No. 5 – “To Children” by Maria E. Carter (unsigned, hand-dated, September 10, 1902, printed date 1902)
- No. 6 – Untitled, on “reticence in the use of flowers for decoration” (hand dated May 19, 1903)
- No. 7 – “Protect the Laurel” (probably dated 1903)
- No. 8 – “Consider the Lily of the Fields” by Margaret Deland⁵⁷ (hand dated, May 11, 1904, printed date, reprinted in *The Plant World*, August 1904, p. 203, and *The American Botanist*, Vol. VII, No. 2 (August 1904): 35–36)
- No. 9 – “Plea for More Protection of Wild Flowers” (hand dated May 11, 1904, printed date 1904)
- No. 10 – “A Plea for the Wild Flower: Circular Report of the Seal Harbor Village Improvement Society”⁵⁸ (reprinted by permission, hand dated May 11, 1904)
- No. 11 – “A Treasure Spot of Wild Flowers”⁵⁹ by Miss S.G. Streeter (hand dated, May 31, 1905, printed date 1905) (reprinted from *The Plant World*, March 1905)
- No. 12 – “Flower Sacrifice: Selections printed by the kind permission of the author, Okakura-Kakuzo”⁶⁰ (hand dated May 16, 1906, printed date 1906)
- No. 13 – “A Plea for the Preservation of our Ferns” by George E. Davenport (adapted from Leaflet No. 3) with excerpts from letters of local secretaries (hand dated May 16, 1906, printed date 1906)
- No. 14 – “Meeting of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants” by Margaret E. Allen (hand dated, April 8, 1907) reprinted from *The Plant World*, Vol. 9, No. 5 (May 1906)
- No. 15 – “Successful Natural Parks” by William Palmer⁶¹ (1907, reprinted from *The Plant World*, Vol. 9, January 1906)
- No. 16 – “Birch-bark” (printed date 1907)
- No. 17 – “Need for Protection of Wild Flowers” by Clarence H. Knowlton,⁶² Chairman of Local Flora Committee, New England Botanical Club (hand dated May 17, 1909)
- No. 18 – “The Protection of Our Native Plants” extracts from an essay by Miss Mary Perle Anderson, winner of the Stokes Fund competition of 1904, reprinted by permission of The Wild Flower Preservation Society of America (hand dated May 4, 1910)
- No. 19 – “Spare Our Wild Flowers: An Address Delivered before the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, May 7, 1910, by Walter Deane,⁶³ President of the New England Botanical Club (hand dated June 29, 1910)
- No. 20 – “Spare Our Roadside Scenery” by Walter Deane (June 20, 1910)
- No. 21 – Eight untitled poems and excerpts of poems (hand dated, April 27, 1911)
- No. 22 – Letter of Support by Sarah Orne Jewett,⁶⁴ (hand dated April 22, 1912)
- No. 23 – “A Plea of the Conservation of Wild Flowers” by George T. Ruddock⁶⁵ (hand dated, April 22, 1912) (reprinted from the *Sierra Club Bulletin* of January 1912 by permission of the author).
- No. 24 – “The Mayflower” Excerpts (hand dated May 31, 1913; printed date, 1913)
- No. 25 – “How to Treat the Wild Flower (Selected from papers written by school girls at the Society’s request) (hand dated July 8, 1914; printed date 1914)
- No. 26 – “Children’s Garden: An Aid to the Protection Native Plants” (printed date 1915)
- No. 27 – “Reminder to Preserve” with quotations from Dr. Charles A. Eastman,⁶⁶ also known as Ohiyesa from the Sioux tribe, with reprints from Leaflet No. 10 (hand dated, May 17, 1918; printed date 1916)
- No. 28 – “From France on the Rules for Gathering Wild Flowers” (hand dated, May 7, 1917; printed date 1917)
- No. 29 – “Suggestions about Wild Flowers – Flower Observation: Flower Planting; Flower Picking” (1918)
- No. 30 – “Protect the Mayflower” by J.E. Chamberlin⁶⁷ (reprinted from the *Boston Transcript*) (hand dated May 15, 1918; printed date 1915)
- No. 31 – “A Model Sanctuary: Unique Country Club that Serves Scientists and Wild Life Alike” (hand dated July 2, 1919; printed date 1919)
- No. 32 – “Support for the Massachusetts Audubon Society’s Sanctuary at Moose Hill, Sharon, Mass.” (hand dated May 21, 1921; printed date 1920)
- No. 33 – “To Motorists: Help to Keep the Roadside Beautiful” (hand dated May 2, 1921; printed date 1921)

A complete set of leaflets, Nos. 1–33, is tucked away in the archives of Native Plant Trust. Otherwise, they are unavailable, except for four on microfiche in the Frances Loeb Library at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and several that were reproduced in *The Plant World*.

of the Harvard Botanic Garden and the Gray Herbarium, as well as the force behind Harvard's Botanical Museum, including the commission of the extraordinary Blaschka glass flowers (still the Museum's most popular attraction). A friend to the Cambridge Plant Club and a brilliant lecturer,⁶⁸ Professor Goodale produced an impressive list of publications over his career – textbooks, research papers, and books of popular interest, including the quarto volume on wild flowers illustrated by Isaac Sprague (Feature 3).⁶⁹

More than a generation younger than Goodale, Merritt L. Fernald (1873–1950), profiled in Feature 15, was also a plant lover from an early age and a rugged field botanist, known for his enthusiasm in the face of botanical wonders. He succeeded Goodale as Harvard's Fisher Professor of Natural History and later directed the Gray Herbarium. Professor Fernald possessed a vast knowledge of the native plants of eastern North America, and was known for his hypotheses on the persistence of species in areas that escaped glaciation.

Miss Folsom assumed the role of treasurer (replacing Miss Warren). The secretarial duties were divided, Miss Carter continuing in the corresponding role, and Miss Allen, taking on the work of recording. After the death of the Hon. Frank Hill, his successor as secretary to the State Board of Education, George H. Martin, an advocate of school gardens as laboratories, joined the Society's board as a vice president.⁷⁰

In 1907, *The Plant World's* editorial offices moved west, and the journal ceased to be a publicity source for the Society. Nevertheless, other sources filled in the loss of coverage. Leaflets continued to be sent, and the Boston Society of Natural History continued to provide an office. Professor Jackson also continued to serve as president and to spread word of the Society.

Here are some SPNP news items from 1907 through World War I and its aftermath:

- In the August 1907 issue of *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*, the secretary-treasurer of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America reported on a meeting with the Society for the Protection of Native Plants held at the Boston Society of Natural History.⁷¹ The New York society's representative stated, "There can be no doubt that the large population of Boston and its environs has been greatly enlightened on the subject of plant protection by the many excellent leaflets distributed by [the Society]."

- In 1909, the Society participated in an exhibition organized by the "Boston – 1915" movement, a cooperative effort of citizens dedicated to building a better city over the next five years.⁷²
- An article in a national florist journal by the renown William N. Craig, the manager of Brookline's Faulkner Farm, reported:⁷³

Vigorous steps are being taken by the society for the protection of native plants to put an end to the excessive cutting of mountain laurel in this state for Christmas and other festivals. Efforts will be made to sufficiently arouse public sentiment so that districts where it grows abundantly will be closed to the dealer in greens. The demand will certainly soon use up the remaining supply, unless prohibition is enforced.

- In 1911, the Society's secretary, Miss Carter of the Boston Society of Natural History, was still writing with urgency about the cause. In an Agassiz Association publication,⁷⁴ she described appeals and notices for posting. One notice, printed on cotton, for outdoor use said this:

SPARE THE FLOWERS

Thoughtless people are destroying the flowers by pulling them up by the roots or by picking too many of them

CUT what flowers you take, and leave plenty to go to seed.

The article elaborated:

"We should like to add to the above notice that too many wild flowers are picked without any special object. Many of our wild flowers that are beautiful in their own homes lose almost immediately their freshness and charm when picked. Why not leave them where they grow for others to enjoy? Some people when in the woods and fields have a mania for picking every flower they see, although often it is thrown away without even being carried home."

- In 1913, Professor Jackson wrote an item on the work of the Society that was published in the *Sierra Club Bulletin*.⁷⁵
- Miss Folsom continued her activity, contributing items to the Agassiz Association's nature publication.⁷⁶ She also began serving as an advisor to The Garden Club of America on its wild flower preservation work.⁷⁷

Professor Merritt Lyndon Fernald, Vice President of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants

A rugged field botanist, Merritt Lyndon Fernald (1873–1950) was a man with an extraordinary enthusiasm for botanical research and discovery.⁷⁸ He spoke to the Cambridge Plant Club six times over the course of his career. Although he made his first talk to the club in 1895 (when he was only 22 years old), the notes of the club's scribe indicate that his enthusiasm for botanical wonders was well communicated. Over the years, Fernald's taxonomic papers were often accompanied by entertaining travelogue details, and this seems to have been the case in his debut appearance with the club, where he spoke on the Peary expedition to Greenland as well as his own travels in the Aroostock Valley. Fernald also had a reputation for quickness with puns. One wonders if he dared pun with the Plant Club women.

The son of a professor at the Maine State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts (later the University of Maine), Fernald determined that botany would be his career at a young age. He published his first botanical paper of 1890 at age 17 (concerning two taxa in *Carex*), and then began a correspondence with the curator of the Gray Herbarium. That director offered Fernald an opportunity “for a young man who is willing to begin at the bottom and work his way upward.” Fernald took the offer, becoming a helper in the Gray Herbarium and a part-time student at Harvard. Over his remarkable near 60-year

association with Harvard, Fernald did work his way up in Harvard's botanical firmament, from his undergraduate degree, undertaking critical field work and acquiring a vast knowledge of taxonomy, ultimately becoming Fisher Professor of Natural History and directing the Gray Herbarium.

Fernald's field trips first in Maine, later in Quebec, Newfoundland, Michigan, Virginia, and near Cambridge, gave him a firsthand knowledge of the plants of eastern North America that was remarkable. He was an outstanding teacher (with a legendary ability to speak without notes) and writer (his published works number over 800, including the groundbreaking *Persistence of Plants in Unglaciated Places in Boreal North America* (1925); “Edible Wild Plants of Eastern North America with co-author Alfred Kinsey (1943); and the 8th edition of *Gray's Manual* (1950).

In his own words, Fernald devoted his life to “an intensive study of the high plants (the flora) of temperate eastern North America, and an attempt to correlate distribution of the flora (and incidentally the fauna) with the geologic history of the area.”

Fernald was regarded with great esteem and affection. A series of remembrances in *Rhodora* by eminent botanists, including one who was also a renown classicist, testify to Fernald's brilliance and the pleasure that others took in his company.

Fernald received many honors from scientific societies at home and abroad. One that he would not have appreciated – the naming of Fernald Drive – one of the two streets that pierces through what once was the Harvard Botanical Garden, the oldest botanical garden in continuous existence in America. Tragically, the garden was shuttered by Harvard after World War II and given over to “modernist” faculty housing.



Merritt L. Fernald and Bayard Long, collecting at Burwell's Bay, James River, Virginia, April 1942. Photograph by E.C. Abbe (Archives of the Gray Herbarium)

Throughout these years, members of the Cambridge Plant Club supported the work of the Society. For example, in 1915, the club sent the Society's literature to all Cambridge churches in November as a protest against the “wanton use of mountain laurel at Christmas time.”

In 1915, Miss Carter, longtime officer of the Society and curator at the Boston Society of Natural History, died.⁷⁹ The leaders of the Society had to face the fact that they were aging, and at least two of the Society's officers considered the possibility of becoming a chapter of the New York-based Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.⁸⁰

However, a joining of the two organizations did not come to pass, perhaps because the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, with 3,000 members, tightened its ties with the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and began to use the Audubon

Society's office. The two societies had long shared members, and their connection was strengthened with the establishment of an Audubon preserve in Sharon, Massachusetts – a first for the society. This bird sanctuary of nearly 2,000 acres, the preserve, named Moose Hill, also provided a sanctuary for native plants. An editorial item in a 1920 issue of the Audubon Society's journal spoke to its interest in protecting rare plants:⁸¹

At [Moose Hill] may be found many of the rarer wild flowers and ferns of the region. Nature students interested in these are cordially invited to make use of the Sanctuary grounds where the warden carefully guards these rare plants from depredations. He knows plants as well as birds and is always willing to serve as guide. Among the other collections to be seen at the Sanctuary headquarters are mounted specimens of the rarer

ferns. The work of preserving these beauties of our forest, too often thoughtlessly destroyed, is a valuable one and deserves encouragement.

In a 1921 report on a joint pilgrimage of the two societies to an exhibition at Horticultural Hall, the scribe for the Audubon bulletin offered this note of praise for the Society for the Protection of Native Plants:⁸²

The Society for the Protection of Native Plants is doing a splendid work throughout our State in calling attention to the need of preserving our rarer wild flowers and plants from thoughtless destruction. This work also is carried on far beyond the limits of the State and appeals to the Society from libraries or schools for leaflets are always honored.

The exhibition in question was a May 1921 wild orchid show staged by Alfred C. Burrage, who was about to become president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.⁸³ The show attracted 25,000 visitors, and gave fresh attention to the ephemeral spring beauty of native plants and to the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.

Then, quite suddenly in 1922, the SPNP dropped through the looking glass – its history scrubbed, abbreviated, minimized, key contributors expunged from the record. Look today for a description, and you will find something like this capsule history published on the 90th anniversary of the Society's founding:⁸⁴

The New England Wild Flower Society traces its roots to the Native Plant Society [*sic*] founded in Boston in 1900 by Amy Folsom. Enthusiastically amateur, with no offices and no dues of its own, the society received mail at the offices of the Audubon Society. In 1922 the Garden Club of America, seeking to extend its conservation work into New England contacted the Native Plant Society [*sic*]. Then in ill health, Folsom was happy to allow her society to be absorbed into the new Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants, chaired by Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby.

What happened? Why the sudden devaluation of the Society and its 20 years of work, especially at a time when the new president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society was a native plant enthusiast?

Feature 16

**Announcement,
1910 Annual Meeting,
Society for the
Protection of Native
Plants**

A distinguished naturalist with a particular passion for botany, Walter Deane was a key figure in the Cambridge botanical circles. He spoke to the Cambridge Plant Club eight times between 1890 and 1916.

Society for the Protection of Native Plants

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the Lecture Hall of the Boston Society of Natural History, 234 Berkeley Street, on Saturday, May 7, at 11 a.m.

An address entitled "Spare Our Wild Flowers and Our Roadside Scenery" will be given by Mr. Walter Deane, President of the New England Botanical Club.

You are cordially invited to be present with friends.

The fees of sustaining members are now due and may be paid at this meeting.

MARGARET E. ALLEN,
Corresponding Secretary.

The Society for the Protection of Native Plants Gives Way to New Leadership and Is Renamed

The next chapter of the story of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants is tied to The Garden Club of America. Founded in 1913, the GCA soon began a campaign to beautify roadsides and preserve natural beauty that is documented in its quarterly *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*.⁸⁵ By 1916, a “wild flower preservation” committee was part of the effort. The chair of the committee, Mrs. Francis C. Farwell of Illinois (she preferred to be called Fanny Day), was a friend of the Columbia University botanist Elizabeth G.K. Britton, who had been an early advocate of native plant protection and a founder of both the New York Botanical Society and the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.

The concerns of the GCA clubs varied geographically, so within a few years, the organization’s national wild flower committee divided member clubs into area zones (not the zones of today’s GCA). Facilitating the sharing of information among the far-flung clubs were excellent articles in its bulletins by experts such as Beatrix Farrand and Gertrude Jekyll. These articles document the breadth of the GCA’s preservation concerns, from laurel and holly in the Eastern forests, to redwoods in California, and rare wild flowers and ferns everywhere in between.

In May 1921, the *Bulletin* put out a special “Wild Flower Number” – a compilation of annual reports from each zone that is a snapshot of the plant protection movement across the country at that moment in time. In its report, the Massachusetts Zone announced that the North Shore Garden Club and the Chestnut Hill Garden Society [*sic*] had formed a committee, and that the committee was pleased to have the “endorsement” of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants and Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum, who had advocated for wild flower conservation and gardening for years. However, the committee noted a “crying need” for a Massachusetts chairman. Knowing that the work could not be accomplished “in a day,” the committee announced an opening for “the full time of an active person, plus money, energy and enthusiasm.”

A tall order, but within a year, an outstanding candidate appeared in the form of Mrs. Stephen Van Rensselaer Crosby (née Henrietta “Rita” Marion Grew), whose garden and greenhouse in Manchester-by-the-Sea were horticultural showplaces.⁸⁶ Moreover, Mrs. Crosby was already part

of the GCA’s leadership. In 1920, as president of the North Shore Garden Club, she had been responsible for hosting the GCA’s annual meeting, at which she had been elected to succeed the beloved founding president of the GCA. However, in less than a year, Mrs. Crosby suddenly resigned the position, due to an “unexpected” change of plans that caused her to prolong a stay in Europe for some months. When Mrs. Crosby returned to the States, she was pressed – perhaps to make amends for abruptly dropping the presidency – to take responsibility of the GCA Wild Flower Committee’s Massachusetts Zone.⁸⁷

Mrs. Crosby replied affirmatively. Indeed, the new GCA president and the head of the national wild flower committee had laid the groundwork for a new chairperson to make a fast start in the position. Following Mrs. Crosby’s resignation of the presidency, her successor, Mrs. Samuel Sloan (née Katharine “Kitty” Colt), had moved the wild flower cause forward with purpose. In November 1921, Mrs. Sloan met Albert Burrage, the orchid-collector president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, at an exhibition of the Horticultural Society of New York. The meeting proved consequential. The two leaders discussed what could be accomplished through closer cooperation between their respective organizations. At the time, Mr. Burrage was in the midst of preparing for his next exhibition – a springtime show of all the wild ferns and wild flowers found in Massachusetts – and he was aware of the wild flower preservation work of the GCA’s Fanny Day Farwell. Mr. Burrage and Mrs. Sloan chose wild flower preservation as the focus of mutual interest.

Two months after the New York meeting, Mr. Burrage hosted a luncheon in January for the GCA’s leaders – Mrs. Sloan, Mrs. Farwell, representatives of the member clubs, as well as the secretary, who wrote an account of the event.⁸⁸ Mrs. Farwell made an impressive presentation, showing her detailed understanding of wild flowers, both generally and specifically in New England. Though the GCA was still a young organization, Mr. Burrage expressed his appreciation of what garden clubs could do and offered his support.

Although Mrs. Crosby, apparently still in Europe, was not in attendance at Mr. Burrage’s luncheon Mrs. Farwell and Mrs. Sloan could not have given her a better introduction to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Mr. Burrage opened the resources of the Society to Mrs. Crosby when she

Feature 17

Horticultural Hall, First Home of the Society of New England Wild Flower Preservation Society

Located at the corner of Massachusetts and Huntington avenues, the English Renaissance style Horticultural Hall, was dedicated in 1901 with a fabulous exhibition of azaleas, rhododendrons, vines, perennials, bulbs and orchids. The third home of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the Hall became the home of the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants in 1922. The Society remained there until 1968,

when it moved to Garden in the Woods. Sadly, the Horticultural Society was forced by to sell the building for financial reasons in 1992.

Photograph, dated April 19, 1920, in the Leon H. Abdalian Collection, Boston Public Library. Glass negative, black & white, 11 x 14 in.



became the GCA's Massachusetts zone wild flower chair. A first step was publicity; an article entitled "Wild Flower Preservation," which covered preservation issues and strategies, was the lead article of the MHS's April bulletin.⁸⁹

As for the GCA, Mrs. Farwell performed a further service that guided Mrs. Crosby as she took the leadership of her GCA wild flower zone – a clarifying of focus. Mrs. Farwell, who had been championing the cause of native plant protection for nearly a decade, offered a fresh perspective. She put her finger on a tonal issue that had perhaps hindered the effectiveness of the literature put out by the Boston-based Society as well as its sister organization, the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America. In their earnest desire to save vanishing native plants, some circulars could be preachy, even indignant, suggesting a campaign of privileged people who knew better than others.

Regarding the "difficult task of conservation," Mrs. Farwell gave this advice in *GCA Bulletin's* May 1922 Wild Flower Number:⁹⁰

Conservation sounds somewhat negative, but it should not be; in fact, in using the term we mean something quite affirmative and constructive. As one of our members said, "Too many don'ts makes me want to smash windows." We are freedom-loving Americans and while we respond eagerly to one who says "let's come and do," we become contrary when we are told we "must not." So we who are leaders in the [Wild Flower] Zone are trying to keep this American characteristic in mind.

Wild-flower lover though she was, Mrs. Farwell was also politically astute.

Feature 18

Home of Albert C. Burrage, President of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1921–1931

The photograph shows a panoramic view of the Albert C. Burrage mansion at 314 Commonwealth Avenue, 1903 (Library of Congress). Built in 1899 as the winter home for attorney, industrialist and philanthropist, the mansion remained in the Burrage family until 1947.

For more on the history of the house, see “The Burrage House Study Report” by the Boston Landmarks Commission.



The advance work of Kitty Sloan and Fanny Day Farwell thus favored Mrs. Crosby as she assumed responsibility for the Massachusetts Zone. The two GCA leaders provided her with a clear vision as well as the support of the august Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the philanthropic horticulturist Mr. Burrage, who would lead the organization for nearly a decade more.

The announcement that Mrs. Crosby had accepted the chairmanship on the Massachusetts Wild Flower Zone was made in the March 1922 issue of the *Bulletin*.⁹¹ The kindly and enthusiastic Mrs. Farwell expressed gratitude toward Mrs. Crosby and offered congratulations to the clubs that would have her leadership. And noting pledges of support from the president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the director of the Arnold Arboretum, Mrs. Farwell conveyed her expectation that the Massachusetts Zone would be of great service to all the GCA zones.

Mrs. Farwell also announced that the Society for the Protection of Native Plants – “an old and valued organization with some 2600 members” – had offered to affiliate with the Massachusetts Zone. Said the GCA chair, “We are extremely fortunate to have so important an addition to our membership as well as the help of their many splendid leaflets.”

By the time that Mrs. Crosby’s Zone report appeared in the May GCA *Bulletin*, she had been on the job for two months. She announced a “far-reaching” educational campaign to urge

the people to safeguard the native trees, plants and shrubs, and to pick with care those that are plentiful, leaving the rarer species to seed themselves.⁹² Her committee – now expanded to include

Feature 19

Photograph, “Wild Flower and Fern Show at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society”

“The Talk of the Trade,” *Horticulture*, Vol. XXXV, No. 9 (May 10, 1922), p. 215



Connecticut and renamed the New England Zone – included representatives from the GCA clubs in the region, several members-at-large in Massachusetts, Mr. Burrage, and an unnamed “former officer” of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants – perhaps Miss Amy Folsom? (Mrs. Crosby’s inclusion of non-GCA members was notable – a signal that she intended to have some independence vis-à-vis the GCA.) According to her report in the *Bulletin*, the committee would be represented at the upcoming wild flower exhibition at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

Mrs. Crosby’s reference to Albert Burrage’s wild flower and fern exhibition was understated to say the least. In the press, the show was described as “the greatest collection of exotic orchids the New World has yet seen.”⁹³ Open for 11 days in early May 1922, Mr. Burrage’s exhibition was even more popular than his orchid show of the previous year. It was a sensation, a blockbuster, wonderful publicity for the cause of native plant protection. The great estate gardener, William Craig of Faulkner Farm, gave a description of the exhibition – a replica of a natural mountain gorge – that still impresses:⁹⁴

Visitors entered the hall via the loggia through a wide avenue of spruce trees reaching the ceiling, on a path of soft sand, gravel and pine needles, to be greeted by a waterfall in a rocky promontory, 24 feet, water spilling over a series of short dips, then a 15-foot drop, to a pool, then a stream which disappeared into rocks hiding a recirculation pipe. Around the sides of the hall rising 50 feet were mountains heavily clad with pines, hemlocks, cedars, spruces, and other evergreens, scattered through which were white dogwood, shadbush, great laurel, mountain laurel, sheep laurel, viburnum, and other native shrubs and trees in flower. At the lower elevations among crannies and crevices and on the sheer face of moss-covered rocks were masses of all the ferns native to Massachusetts, 47 in number, and near the base artfully placed cypridium, mayflowers, violas, asters, bluets, trilliums, hepaticas, ranunculus, anemones, blood-roots and numbers of other wild flowers, 83 in all. Exit was by a dense avenue of spruces. All the plants in the show were forced – with great skill in the timing – in Mr. Burrage’s greenhouses on Boston’s North Shore.

Over 85,000 people attended the Massachusetts Horticultural Society’s show. (To give some perspective on the exhibition’s attendance, the Society only had 1,075 members in 1922.) The show also

featured an accompanying program of four free illustrated lectures on New England Wild Flowers,⁹⁵ including talks by Dr. Robert T. Jackson (“The Conservation of Our Wild Flowers”) and Professor Merritt L. Fernald (“Some Reasons Why Our Wild Flowers Are Rare”). Although the names of Jackson and Fernald appear in press accounts, neither one is identified as having been affiliated with the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.

Mrs. Crosby could not have had a better public debut as the new leader of the cause. At the exhibition, Mrs. Crosby’s committee gave out “thousands” of leaflets about its plans and added hundreds of new members, both adults and juniors. However, those new members were not joining the *Society for the Protection of Native Plants*, but a reorganized, renamed association, the *Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants*.⁹⁶

And what of the earlier society? An article that came out during the wild flower exhibition in a horticultural publication called *The Seed World* provides some information. It introduced Mrs. Crosby’s new plant society, along with a revised history of its predecessor:⁹⁷

Some twenty years ago a society for the Protection of Native Plants was formed by a few Boston ladies and carried on by them until recently. This society by occasional lectures and the publication of leaflets spread the idea of protection. Now this society has passed over into a Society of the Protection [*sic*] of New England Plants, which has been founded under the auspices of the Garden Club of America and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, with headquarters in Horticultural Hall, Boston.

The article made no mention of the contributions of Harvard professors Jackson, Goodale, Fernald, Robinson; of the longtime service of Miss Folsom as treasurer and Miss Allen as secretary, or of Miss Carter, the herbarium curator at the Boston Society of Natural History. Referring to “occasional” activities of “a few Boston ladies,” it created the impression that the Society for the Protection of Native Plants had been a rather desultory women’s enterprise.

What were the feelings of Professor Jackson, the erstwhile president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, at the events of May 1922? He may have given his lecture at the wild flower show in the spirit of a valedictory address. And as reported in press accounts, Jackson anticipated the future of the movement, advocating that wild flower protection and cultivation were compatible.⁹⁸

Professor Jackson was gracious, but the society to which had given so much time for over 20 years – had a new name and a diminished history. Its years of effort devoted to protecting native plants were minimized. Its writings were not credited when they were borrowed in the publications of the new society. Moreover, its geographical reach was reduced. While the Society for the Protection of Native Plants had members throughout the country from its earliest days, the designation of New England in the name of the successor society suggested that its interests would henceforth be more local – conforming with Mrs. Crosby’s GCA responsibilities and not stepping on the territory of other GCA zones.

The announcement circular of the *Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants* made no reference to the prior society. Indeed, a reader with no prior knowledge of the earlier society might assume that Mrs. Crosby’s organization was entirely novel. In referring to wild flowers that were “common” 20 years before, the flyer suggested that the problem was recent. This, even though the flyer borrowed extensively from its predecessor’s literature, e.g., in describing the danger facing the native laurel and the loss of the magnolia from the swamps of Essex County on the North Shore of Boston.

It was a confusing moment not only for the members of the former Society for the Protection of Native Plants, but also for The Garden Club of America. The announcement piece stated that the Society “has been formed” under the auspices of the GCA and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. But Mrs. Farwell’s wild flower committee report in the GCA’s July 1922 *Bulletin* varied from the flyer on key points.⁹⁹ She wrote of the *Society for the Protection of Native Plants* (note the original name, not the new one), and stated that it “was working” with the GCA.

Had the Society for the Protection of Native Plants given way to a new society or not? Would Mrs. Crosby continue to chair the GCA’s New England Zone separately from the new society, whatever its name? The facts reported in the GCA’s *Bulletin* (e.g., the name of the Society and its relationship to the GCA’s Massachusetts zone) were at odds with the announcement circular. The discrepancies must have been embarrassing to Mrs. Farwell; she did not refer to the Society in the GCA *Bulletin* again – either the old one or the new.

Mrs. Crosby’s Society

The spring of 1922 was a watershed moment for native plant preservation. A new organization – the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants (SPNNEP) – debuted at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society blockbuster exhibition. Enthusiastic attendees joined to support the cause. Further, the president of the Horticultural Society donated the proceeds of the wild flower show to Mrs. Crosby’s new society, and also provided a rent-free office in Horticultural Hall.¹⁰⁰ Though the office was small, it was well located – on the second floor at the top of the staircase. And the office was staffed by a newly hired executive secretary, ready to welcome visitors and provide information.

The GCA’s president and the chair of its wild flower committee had recruited Mrs. Crosby to chair its New England committee and facilitated her way. But once in the position, Mrs. Crosby pursued a path independent of the GCA. Mr. Burrage’s generosity made this possible. Mrs. Crosby could have chosen to emphasize the ties with Society for the Protection of Native Plants, preserving the connection with the Harvard botanists. Instead, she shaped an organization under the aegis of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, albeit one with a similar name and a membership list derived from the earlier society.

Although GCA garden club members were included on Mrs. Crosby’s board, the new society did not have a formal connection to the GCA. As

Feature 20

First Pamphlets Issued by the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants, 1922

How Motorists Can Help the Wild-flowers (motorists could inform themselves of flowers that can be picked and those that should not be)

How Teachers Can Help the Wild-flowers (teachers could instruct children bringing spring flowers into school on what not to pick)

How Invalids Can Help the Wild-flowers (shut-ins might instruct friends in what flowers not to bring)

How Amateur Decorators Can Help the Wild-flowers (decorators could find substitutes for the great quantities of evergreens used in winter, particularly at Christmastime)

How Everyone Can Help the Wild-flowers (develop understanding of what is common, what is rare, how to pick and use restraint)

for the GCA New England Zone, introduced with fanfare in the May issue of the *GCA Bulletin*, it received no further mention after the July 1922 issue. The GCA's New England Zone faded in deference to the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants. The memory of Mrs. Sloan and Mrs. Farwell's contributions to the SPNNEP were forgotten.

Whatever the awkwardness of the transition vis-à-vis the officers of the GCA and the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, Mrs. Crosby moved efficiently to publicize her new organization. A series of flyers followed the Society's announcement circular, providing further information, each one directed to different audiences.¹⁰¹ Although none of the flyers mentioned the GCA, the association with the Massachusetts Horticultural Society was emphasized.

Seeking further publicity, Mrs. Crosby contributed an article about the new Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants in the bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.¹⁰² Essentially identical in wording to the circular, it closed with the hope that the New England Antiquities preservationists would support an organization devoted to the preservation of New England's native plants.

The Society's educational campaign continued through 1922 and into the next year. In the fall, information about the Society was laid out in the "Conservation Number" of the *Nature-Study Review*.¹⁰³ This appealingly designed journal included information from the circular and the pamphlets listed above (with the exception of the one for invalids) plus another one entitled "Flowers Needing Protection" (a list of flowers that should not be picked). The next year, the Society began a school lecture program. The Society thus established itself, though there was no mention of its activities in the *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* over these early years.

In 1925, the name of the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants was revised.

Apparently many people felt that the name was too long and difficult. The word "Native" gave way to "Wild Flower" and "New England" moved to the front of the title. The name became the *New England Wild Flower Preservation Society*.¹⁰⁴ Mrs. Crosby continued as treasurer and chairman of the board of directors. At the same time, Mrs. Crosby assumed the chairmanship of a newly organized GCA "Conservation" committee, which assumed the wild flower portfolio and more.¹⁰⁵

Garden clubs were proliferating in the 1920s, and Mrs. Crosby understood their power as well as the influence of their conservation chairmen. The Society thus reached out to garden clubs to spread the wild flower preservation message. The records of the Cambridge Plant Club provide an example of that outreach. In January 1924, the Society's executive secretary, Miss Lilly S. Tobey, ventured to Cambridge, showing some 100 slides of "choice wild flowers and landscapes." According to the meeting minutes, Miss Tobey noted that in Switzerland parents and guardians were responsible for the "depredations of children." She urged laws suited to different locations, and education of motorists. Noting that the laurel and the mayflower were in danger of extermination, Miss Tobey made a plea for the creation of sanctuaries and planting of wild gardens.

In March 1931, the Society's Mrs. Henry Hyslop Richardson, who was also a member of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club, spoke to the Plant Club.¹⁰⁶ (As described in the next section, Mrs. Richardson had created a well-known wild flower garden with her husband and later succeeded Mrs. Crosby as president of the Society.) According to the club secretary's minutes:

"Mrs. Richardson spoke in a delightful manner, and showed beautiful colored slides. Mrs. HHR began by telling what has been accomplished in Japan by the love of the people for their wild plant life, and in European countries, 'specially Switzerland, by active protection and in America by the Save the Redwoods League and campaign for Prevention of Forest Fires and for Reforestation. She went on to describe the plants that spread so easily that they need no protection, such as asters, dandelions, etc. Wood and swamp plants in general need protection, with a long list of our most beautiful wildflowers, and can only get it by education of the public, by establishing flower sanctuaries, and by prevention of forest fires."

In closing, Mrs. Richardson stressed that the mountain laurel remained in special danger on account of its popularity for Christmas greens."

In December 1940, Mrs. Crosby herself came to speak to the Plant Club.¹⁰⁷ It is likely that she was invited to Cambridge by her niece, Mrs. R. Ammi Cutter (née Ruth Dexter Grew), who was a new member of the Plant Club and serving on its program committee. Mrs. Crosby spoke of the work of the Society – started as a "pioneer" in 1922.

(By 1940, Plant Club members who might have attended Professor Jackson's talk on the Society for the Protection of Native Plants were over 80 years old.)

In lectures to garden clubs, the Society's speakers encouraged club members to attend the meetings at Horticultural Hall. The Plant Club's records show that the Cambridge women were regular attendees at these meetings, and that they later gave reports at club meetings. The Society had tables at the MHS's flowers shows, staffed with garden club volunteers who encouraged show-goers to take memberships in the NEWFPS. In the autumn flower show, the Society's Christmas greens competition – with the only restriction that no holly, laurel, or ground pine were to be used – was popular. The minutes of the Cambridge Plant Club testify to the interest in these greens competitions – and also to the difficulty of avoiding outlawed material.

The Society also spread the message to schools throughout New England, arranging lectures and slide talks at no charge.¹⁰⁸ Within 30 miles of Boston, lecturers were sent. Beyond that radius, the Society sent slides with a prepared script. Illustrated talks were also given to adult organizations for a small fee. During the summer, camps were the focus of educational initiatives.

The Society sought publicity in newspapers, and was given space in *Horticulture* magazine (then a semimonthly publication) placing a spotlight on protection of rare plants, especially the mayflower and lady-slippers. It produced conservation booklets, posters, leaflets, and postcards. The campaign to curb the use of laurel, holly and ground pine decorations in churches, stores, clubs continued, and was increasingly heeded by florists. At the same time, the Society provided information about making decorations with materials that weren't in need of protection. And exhibitions at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society became another means of spreading the Society's message.

Nine years after the appearance of the new society (or the re-formation of the old one), Mrs. Crosby wrote about the formation of the Society in the April 1931 issue of *Old-Time New England*.¹⁰⁹

This Society started about eight years ago, being the outgrowth of a smaller society formed several years previous by a group of about twenty Boston ladies, who already sensed the danger of extermination that many of our wild flowers were facing. They gave their good will and a nucleus for a membership list and the Massachusetts

Horticultural Society gave its unfailing help in the shape of an office, light and heat. Added to this The Garden Club of America sanctioned the new Society to act as its conservation committee in New England, so, with this stalwart backing, the baby society made its appearance in the world.

Previous published reports had implied a smaller number of founders for the earlier society. Mrs. Crosby's account also glides over the 1922 transition year, including the powerful encouragement of Mr. Burrage's great wild flower show at Horticultural Hall. Further, the assertion that the GCA "sanctioned the new Society to act as its conservation committee in New England" conflicts with the contemporaneous accounts in the GCA's bulletins.

Historical discrepancies aside, Mrs. Crosby could take pride in a well-established organization with 2,013 adult members and 7,643 junior members, though the latter paid only 10 cents (covering the cost of a membership button and literature). Her society was busy with outreach to all organizations that might help – giving free color-slide lectures to schools and talks to women's clubs, garden clubs, granges, church societies, encouraging listeners to join. The Society advocated for care in selection of Christmas greens, as well as reforestation. It issued informative plant lists, charts, postcards and posters, and set up booths at county fairs. Along with its literature, the Society stood ready to answer questions. A thriving enterprise, the Society incorporated in 1932 with Mrs. Crosby as president.

The longest article on the Society in the Mrs. Crosby era was published in the *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Yearbook for 1940*.¹¹⁰ Again, the pre-history of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society is brief and vague:

In 1900 some interested people in Boston formed a society to protect native plants, calling themselves the Native Plant Society [*sic*].

The use of the gender-neutral "people" suggests some caution about the role of men. There is any mention of the influential backing of Harvard professors, such as Merritt L. Fernald, George L. Goodale, and Benjamin L. Robinson; or of president, Robert T. Jackson, honorary president, Mrs. Asa Gray, or secretary Maria E. Carter, herbarium curator at the Boston Society of Natural History. Also, unreported were the endorsements of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the New England Botanical Club.

The article goes on to state incorrectly:

They had no office and no dues, but were given permission to receive mail at the office of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

In fact, from 1901–1915, the Society for the Protection of Native Plants enjoyed a relationship with the Boston Society of Natural History, which provided an office address and meeting space.

The reference to revenue was also inaccurate. Although membership was free, contributions from sustainers were encouraged and the Society did attract such contributors. Further, the account minimized the relationship that the Society had with the Massachusetts Audubon Society. This, despite the natural affinity of birders and plant people.

As with the earlier histories, the impact of the original society is minimized:

Occasionally they issued leaflets and for two or three years their numbers increased... There was much enthusiasm among the members and their influence spread to other localities, but as they had little money with which to work, only occasional contributions, they could not spread out as they had hoped to do.

These statements belie the extent of the activities of the original society and its influence – for example, on the founding of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America.

The article also minimized the contribution of the GCA in the reconstitution of the society:

In 1922 the Garden Club of America wished to start a New England zone in their conservation work and Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby was asked to take charge of it.

There is no mention of the work that was done by the GCA's president Mrs. Sloan or its wild flower committee chair Mrs. Farwell to establish a relationship between the GCA and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Instead, the author goes on to say that Mrs. Crosby:

...knew of the Native Plant Society [*sic*] started by Miss Amy Folsom and in talking with her found that this society was most eager to have a more far-reaching association formed. As Miss Folsom was not well enough herself to do this work, she was willing to give the new society the names of the members and the good will of the old organization.

This reference is the first to state that Miss Folsom “started” the Society for the Protection of Native Plants. Though Miss Folsom may have set forces into motion, the establishment of the organization was a group effort. In early 1901, Miss Folsom's kinsman Professor Jackson agreed to lead the new group as president and Mrs. Asa Gray to serve as honorary president. Professor Jackson and Mrs. Gray likely recruited Harvard's most senior botanists and the Commonwealth's Secretary of Education as vice presidents. And given the association of Professor Jackson and his Harvard colleagues with the Boston Museum of Natural History, they likely recruited Miss Carter, its herbarium curator to serve as corresponding secretary.

As for the description of the transfer of the early society by Amy Folsom to the leadership of Mrs. Crosby in 1922, there were various connections between the two women: GCA's Wild Flower Committee chair Fanny Day Farwell likely knew Miss Folsom, who had consulted with the GCA's Connecticut wild flower zone. (Miss Folsom's name was listed in the May 1920 and 1921 wild flower issues of the GCA's *Bulletin*.) And like Mrs. Crosby, Miss Folsom had a family home in Manchester, and the two women lived within a block of each other in Boston's Back Bay, Mrs. Crosby on Beacon Street and Miss Folsom on Marlborough Street. Mutual acquaintances at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society or the Arnold Arboretum would have been happy to facilitate an introduction.

Also available to Mrs. Crosby was the 1922 *Boston Register and Business Directory's* listing for the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, which listed Amy Folsom as treasurer. In addition to Miss Folsom, the directory listed Robert T. Jackson as president; Margaret E. Allen as corresponding secretary; and Ruth R. Edwards as secretary. These other officers may have welcomed the opportunity to re-establish the Society under the auspices of The Garden Club of America, but the available published record is silent on the point.

Although the relationship of the early society to its successor was initially unclear, by 1930, the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society began to note its roots in the country's first native plant organization. The question of which societies and clubs were the “first of their kind” was gaining currency. Accordingly, it is not surprised to see the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society describe itself as a continuation of the “Native Plant Society [*sic*]” – founded in 1900 [*sic*] in directories of professional societies and associations.¹¹¹

If only Mrs. Crosby had commissioned a fuller account of the Society's first two decades. Nevertheless, she worked diligently in her own time as leader of native plant protection. In 1936, Mrs. Crosby was awarded the Achievement Medal of The Garden Club of America for her "untiring efforts" for the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society, providing inspiration for similar undertakings elsewhere in the United States and in England.¹¹² In January 1938, Mrs. Crosby received the Conservation Award of The Trustees of Public Reservations in recognition of distinguished service for conservation – the first woman to receive the honor.¹¹³

Mrs. Crosby led the Society until 1948, when she stepped down as the Society's president. By then, she devoted over 25 years to the native plant

protection, including through personal tragedy and the difficult years of the Depression and then World War II. Though she had disappointed the GCA in resigning its presidency after less than a year in the position, the fact of the matter was that it freed her to build the organization that became the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. Without Mrs. Crosby, the course of the organization's history would arguably have been far different. If Mrs. Crosby had not accepted the GCA's appeal to lead its Massachusetts wild flower committee, the Society for the Protection of Native Plants would likely have become an interest group within the Massachusetts Audubon Society. And it is difficult to imagine that a GCA zone wild flower committee would have exerted much influence beyond a network of garden clubs.

New Leaders for the Society after Mrs. Crosby

The Society was fortunate in its next president, Mrs. Henry Hyslop Richardson (née Elizabeth Lejée Perry).¹¹⁴ Like Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Richardson (1879–1969) was a member of a GCA club – the Chestnut Hill Garden Club – and had served as its conservation chairman. She had long experience with native plants in the wild flower garden that she and her husband had begun more than 40 years before. That garden, established in an overgrown ravine, became a mecca among wildflower enthusiasts.¹¹⁵ Mr. and Mrs. Richardson were close to the Arnold Arboretum's Charles Sargent, and it is probable that they were members of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants before Mrs. Crosby's time. After Mrs. Crosby's re-launch of the Society, Mr. Richardson served as one of her directors and Mrs. Richardson volunteered as a speaker. As noted above in 1931, Mrs. Richardson gave a slide talk to the Plant Club on "Wild Flower Preservation" that was recorded with appreciation by the club's secretary. Around the same time, her daughter Juliet Richardson also became a speaker after graduating from high school, having "apprenticed" as a guide in her parents' wildflower garden in Brookline.¹¹⁶ Years later, Juliet Richardson Kellogg French became president of the Society, serving from 1973–1977.

In 1949, Mrs. Richardson was succeeded in the presidency by Mrs. William K. [Kenneth] Jackson (née Katharine Mitchell), who served until 1951.¹¹⁷ Like Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Jackson was a member of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club – a club with many accomplished gardeners and beautiful gardens.¹¹⁸ An avid gardener, she had served as president of her garden club in 1944 and 1945. She was also a leader of the club's conservation work, locally and with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts. At the same time, she served as the GCA's Massachusetts conservation chair, a position that gave her knowledge of public and private initiatives throughout the state. Moreover, Mrs. Jackson was a member of the Garden Club of Dublin (New Hampshire), and she was active in conservation work there too.¹¹⁹

Although the presidential terms of Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Jackson were short (one and two years, respectively), their love of gardening and commitment to conservation paved the way for the next president of the Society – a horticulturist of remarkable energy and generosity.

Kathryn Taylor Forges a New Path for the Society

That remarkable horticulturist was Kathryn “Kitty” Sears Taylor (Mrs. Lucien B. Taylor, as she was listed in most publications of the era), who was elected president of the NEWFPS in January 1951.¹²⁰ At the time, she had already served the Society for over two decades. Like her three predecessors, Kathryn Taylor belonged to a GCA garden club – the Noanett Garden Club, with a membership of gardeners drawn from the towns of Dedham, Dover, Needham, Wellesley, and Westwood.

Mrs. Taylor’s interest in horticulture had developed early; according to a feature in the Society’s centennial newsletter, she published her first article in a garden magazine at the age of 10. Following musical training at the New England Conservatory and Boston University, she began horticulture course work, and then became an instructor of horticulture, teaching at the Boston School of Occupational Therapy and the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Groton, Massachusetts. Mrs. Taylor’s passion for sharing horticultural knowledge was also expressed in writing and the production of a series of books and numerous articles that extended into the 1960s.¹²¹

Mrs. Taylor began to leave a horticultural mark as a lecturer, writer and gardener in the 1930s. She became known for her recommendation-filled talks on the “Practical Aspects of Gardening” and “Gardening with Potted Plants.” These talks led to a popular garden book – *Winter Flowers in the Sun-heated Pit* – published in 1941 with a co-author, Cambridge Plant Club member, Mrs. Ward Irving Gregg (née Edith “Edie” Emerson Webster). As innovators of four-season gardening, Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Gregg offered guidance for bringing house plants into winter bloom using sun pits.¹²² Their book became a cult classic for gardeners seeking to overcome New England winters. Though out of print, it still garners online reviews and is sought out by collectors.

During the 1940s, Mrs. Taylor focused increasingly on wild flower gardening, using her own garden in Dover as a laboratory. When she became chair of the GCA Conservation Committee’s Wild Flower Subcommittee (once led by Mrs. Crosby), the fame of her garden as a place of sharing and learning grew in prominence. Many gardeners, including Mrs. Taylor’s Cambridge friends, followed her lead. One Plant Club member, who was fortunate to have a large lot behind her house, transformed it into an “urban” wild flower garden. That garden became a decades-long club project.¹²³

At the same time, Mrs. Taylor also began working on a book that would shape the future of wild flower conservation. That volume – *A Traveler’s Guide to Roadside Flowers, Shrubs and Trees of the U.S.* – was published under the auspices of The Garden Club of America and the National Council of State Garden Clubs. Involving coordination with conservationist gardeners across the country, the book focused new attention on wild flowers.¹²⁴

Mrs. Taylor’s guidebook showed a new path forward for the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. Rather than restricting the focus to protection and preservation – on what *not* to pick or dig, Mrs. Taylor promoted the idea of *planting* wild flowers, wherever they might be grown; one extensive and highly visible option was along highways. Her guidebook was timely, coming before President Eisenhower made the Interstate Highway System a signature initiative, and also anticipating Lady Bird Johnson’s highway beautification campaign. Mrs. Taylor thus shifted the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society’s focus to the cultivation of native plants. And as a hands-on gardener, she worked tirelessly to show novice gardeners how they might do so successfully.

Even after she became president of the Society in 1951, Kitty Taylor continued teaching courses, giving talks, conducting workshops, including in her own garden. If anything, her pace increased. She introduced the Society’s first course in plant identification and propagation, as well as garden tours and field trips. She gave courses in indoor and outdoor gardens at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and to her own garden club.¹²⁵ Thus, under Mrs. Taylor’s leadership, conservation of wild flowers led to *cultivation* of wildflowers – a new horticultural direction for the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society.

Along the way, Mrs. Taylor recruited other volunteers to join the board of the Society, and to lend their talents. Among her Cambridge friends, she was able to call upon a remarkable group of women, members of the Plant Club and the younger sister club, the Garden Club. As described in Feature 22, the clubs had long supported the Society and were early adopters of Mrs. Taylor’s innovative approach to wild flower cultivation. Moreover, the Cambridge women offered not only horticultural knowledge, but also skills in photography, illustration, journalism, and fundraising. Mrs. Taylor called on all of these talents.

Excerpts Pertaining to the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants / New England Wild Flower Preservation Society in the Record Books of the Cambridge Plant Club and the Cambridge Garden Club, 1924-1965

The record books of the Cambridge Plant Club give glimpses of the work of the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants and then the renamed New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. More references are contained in the records of the Cambridge Garden Club, founded in 1938. This feature provides a chronological list of references in the records of the two clubs from the 1920s to the 1960s.*

January 1924

Miss Lilly S. Tobey, Secretary, Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants

Between 30 and 40 present. Miss Tobey lectured in the interest of the Society for the Protection of Native N.E. Plants. Fully 100 pictures of choice wild flowers were shown on the screen and some lovely landscapes. Miss Tobey said that in Switzerland parents and guardians were responsible for the deprivations of children. We need laws suited to different locations. Motorists need educating. The laurel and the Mayflower are in danger of extermination. A plea was made for protecting sanctuaries, planting wild gardens. She made a plea for new members for her society.

November 5, 1929

Meeting Announcement

An appeal was made for the Society for the Protection of Wild Flowers.

Mrs. Rand described the Flower Show of the Monadnock Garden Club. It had an exhibition of model gardens in 3 foot square trays. The best feature of the show was the wood garden shown by the N.E. Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers.

March 3, 1931

Mrs. Henry Hyslop Richardson (Elizabeth Lejée Perry), Speaker for the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. (She was later president of the Society.)

Mrs. Richardson spoke [on wild flower preservation] in a delightful manner, and showed beautiful colored slides. Mrs. HHR began by telling what has been accomplished in Japan by the love of the people for their wild plant life, and in European countries, 'specially Switzerland, by active protection and in America by the Save the Redwoods League and campaign for Prevention of Forest Fires and for Reforestation. She went on to describe the plants that spread so easily that they need no protection, such as asters, dandelions, etc.

Wood and swamp plants in general need protection, with a long list of our most beautiful wildflowers, and can only get it by education of the public, by establishing flower sanctuaries, and by prevention of forest fires. Mountain Laurel is in special danger on account of its popularity for Christmas greens."

November 6, 1933

Meeting Announcement

Last summer the New England Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers asked us to hold a competition for wreaths, with the only restriction that no holly, laurel, or ground pine were to be used. Very few of our members had made wreaths before, and it was very gratifying to have ten, of excellent quality, produced. The judging was by popular vote... The winning wreath is to go to Horticultural Hall on November 23, for entry in a competition with similar wreaths from all over the state. It was decided to send Mrs. Goodale's, as it was doubtful if Mrs. Magoun's, which was made of ivy would stay fresh so long.

Note: Mrs. Goodale was awarded an Honorable Mention in the Society's wreath contest at the Autumn Flower Show. Mrs. Goodale was the daughter-in-law of Professor George Lincoln Goodale, one of the first vice presidents of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.

March 1, 1937

Meeting

Miss Corne gave a full report of the meeting of the Wild Flower Preservation Society.

February 6, 1939

Meeting on Wild Flowers

An appeal from the Society of the Preservation of Wild Flowers was received, asking for co-operation in their work in the schools.

December 2, 1940

Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby (Henrietta "Rita" Grew), President of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society

Miss [Lois Lilley] Howe [the club president] introduced Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby who came to tell us about the work of the Society for the Preservation of N.E. Wild Flowers, the pioneer society for 18 years educational work with grammar and high school pupils as well as with adults. This society now has 1149 annual members and 1239 junior member under 16 years of age. Two summers ago, the ass. Conservation Council through various contributions, started a van which visited 65 camps this past summer with two boys in charge, nature missionaries to protect wild plant life.

Mrs. Crosby invited us to come to the annual meeting in January and take luncheon. There was a lively question period.

After the meeting, the club donated \$10 to the Society, and a member wildflower experts wrote a letter suggesting some revisions to the one of the Society's leaflets.

Miss Howe's introduction indicates that, by 1940, the Plant Club had lost its working memory of the club's early relationship with the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.

Continued on next page

* This feature lists only those wild flower programs that mention the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society. It is not a complete record of club programs relating to wild flowers and native plants. Many club programs featured native plant experts, including members, who showed their own wild flower photographs and watercolor studies, and reported on their experiences as wild flower gardeners. Although some speakers were closely allied with the Society, they did not make official NEWFPS presentations. For example, at a meeting in May 1930, Mrs. Hollis Webster (née Helen Maria Noyes), an esteemed member of the Society, gave a talk that featured a very large collection of wild flowers and herbs.

Feature 21, continued

January 6, 1941

Meeting Announcement

Mrs. Batchelder told of going carefully over the list of Wild Flowers given the club the month before by Mrs. Crosby and of finding several inaccuracies such as violets blooming in July. It was moved and seconded that the Plant Club should suggest that the list be revised.

Mrs. Crosby wrote a letter of thanks on both counts that was read at a subsequent meeting.

May 5, 1941

Meeting, "Tour of Glasshouses and Pits in the Gardens of Several Plant Club Members, including Mrs. Ward Irving Gregg (Edith "Edie" Emerson Webster)

Mrs. Gregg co-authored the classic *Winter Flowers in the Sun-heated Pit* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941) with Kathryn S. Taylor, future president of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society.

May 26, 1941

Visit to Dover Gardens, including Mrs. Lucien Taylor's Gardens and Pit and Mrs. Edward Grew's

...Mrs. Taylor's garden and rock garden, which she and her husband have made out of a meadow features many rare and unusual plants particularly in the rock garden.

...Mrs. Crosby wrote thanks for our contribution of ten dollars toward Wild Flower conservation, and for Mrs. Batchelder's review of their leaflets.

Note: Mrs. Edward W. Grew was the sister-in-law of Mrs. Crosby and the mother of Plant Club member, Ruth Cutter.

Annual Report for 1944-1945

We contributed money to...the Wild Flower Preservation Society.

March 4, 1946

Meeting Announcement

Request for staffing at the Preservation of Wild Flowers booth at the Spring Flower Show

December 2, 1946

Meeting, New England Wild Flower Preservation Society Film by Dr. John B. May

Twenty three members were present, not withstanding the sudden extreme cold, wind, and slipperiness, for the latest film of the New England Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers, photography by [ornithologist] Dr. John B. May of Cohasset. These beautiful colored moving pictures transported us into summer. The pictures, intended particularly for use in schools, plus their captions, call attention to the beauty of flowers and of the out-of doors, and indicate not only what flowers should not be picked at all or sparingly, but wisely, what ones may be freely picked." [The NEWFPS's film rental fee was \$10.]

Mrs. Helburn appealed for more members for the Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers.

April 12, 1948

Mrs. Lucien B. Taylor (Kathryn "Kitty" Sears Park), Treasurer, New England Wild Flower Preservation Society

[During her talk "Wild Flowers and the Building of a Wild Garden"] Mrs. Taylor showed colored slides of her wild garden in Dover and described the way she developed it from an open field into a series of gardens with a brook and masses of wild flowers, trees and shrubs. There was much interest and enthusiasm for the detailed and beautiful slides.

November 15, 1948

Meeting Announcement

Announcements about a request from the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society

April 4, 1949

Meeting

Notable guest: Mrs. William K. Jackson was introduced as president of the N.E. Society of Preservation of Wild Flowers.

May 16, 1949

Field Trip, "Trip to the Garden in the Woods, South Sudbury, with Mr. Howard O. 'Dick' Stiles"

We [23 members and one guest] saw the cool greenhouse, the heated greenhouse, and the various gardens scattered through the woods, everywhere finding choice and rare plants and a great amount of boom, plus encouragement to those of us who struggle with too much shade in our gardens.

October 16, 1950

Mrs. Franklin T. Hammond, Jr., Board Member of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society

The talk ["Edible Fungi" with illustrations - botanical charts, her own watercolor sketches, and actual fungi arranged in their natural surroundings of moss] was most illuminating, and the members can now scour the woods and fields, with a more instructed eye, and bring home new and succulent morsels and enhance their dish.

January 8, 1951

Meeting Announcement

Mrs. Ammi Cutter [née Ruth Grew, niece of Mrs. Crosby] reported briefly on the Wild Flower Preservation Society.

January 7, 1957

Meeting Announcement

Announcement of Annual Meeting of the Wild Flower Preservation Society - Jan 11 and also of the several courses to be given by Mrs. Taylor

May 16, 1965

Field Trip to Will Curtis's Garden in the Woods

Already strongly supportive of the Society, the Cambridge women became familiar Massachusetts Avenue commuters between Harvard Square and the Society's office at Horticultural Hall and could be counted on to provide teams of volunteers at the Society's flower show exhibits. The Cantabrigians included horticulturist and propagator Mrs. R. Ammi (née Ruth Grew) Cutter,¹²⁶ who was a niece of Mrs. Crosby; botanical illustrator Mrs. Franklin T. (née Catherine R. Hedge) Hammond, Jr.¹²⁷; naturalist and activist Mrs. George W. (née Annette Brinckerhoff) Cottrell¹²⁸; Miss Dorothy Bartol; and Mrs. Thorvald S. (née Edith Parker) Ross. Later, came photographer and writer Mrs. Robert T. (née Barbara Birkhoff) Paine¹²⁹; and plantswoman and landscape designer Mrs. Herbert W. (née Patrica Ross) Pratt, among others. Another key volunteer – Dorothy Storer Long – was the daughter of a Plant Club president.

Not only did Mrs. Taylor attract talented volunteers to the Society, she hired an assistant whose support became legendary. Upon the retirement of Mrs. Crosby's long-serving assistant Miss Lilly Tobey in 1954, Mrs. Taylor recruited Persis Green, who came with invaluable experience gained in the library of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, as her executive secretary. Like Miss Tobey, Persis Green served many years, giving expert advice, initiating new activities and then overseeing their implementation. She was admired by all.

As busy as Mrs. Taylor was with the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society, she also gave her time to an impressive list of conservation and horticulture organizations. Mrs. Taylor left a rich legacy with The Garden Club of America, the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the National Council of State Garden Clubs, the Noanett Garden Club, and The Trustees of Reservations, and more. Her contributions were recognized with many awards.¹³⁰

Mrs. Taylor's connections with other horticultural organizational and experts proved to be important when the opportunity to acquire Garden in the Woods presented itself. A president without her practical background and network of supporters might have found the prospect daunting and shied away. But Mrs. Taylor had her own native plant garden as well as friendships with others who presided over ambitious gardens. One of the gardeners who encouraged her was Stephen F. Hamblin.¹³¹ Mr. Hamblin had not only taught botany and horticulture at Harvard's School of Landscape Architecture for three decades, he had served as the director of

Harvard's Botanic Garden and later founded the Lexington Botanic Garden. With such friendships, Mrs. Taylor was equipped to seize the opportunity.

Mr. Hamblin joined with Mrs. Taylor on another major book – *Handbook of Wild Flower Cultivation*, published under the auspices of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society in 1963. Taylor and Hamblin's book contained some 200 excellent drawings of wild flowers by the Cambridge Garden Club's Catherine Hammond. The book was also rich in the information in its appendices, including an extensive bibliography of other publications. To encourage their readers' success, the authors divided their subject into planning the wild flower garden, satisfying the needs of wild flowers, wild flower propagation, wild flowers by family, and flowering trees and shrubs.

With her extensive experience and network of horticultural supporters, Mrs. Taylor thus laid the groundwork for New England Wild Flower Society's future, namely its own garden. In the early 1960s, when Will Curtis and Dick Stiles sought to save their 45-acre woodland botanical garden – created over 30 years – as a public asset. Nowhere in the United States was there a collection of native plants like the one at Garden in the Woods. If Curtis and Stiles did not succeed, it was likely the treasured spot would be subdivided into house lots. But what horticultural organization might take on the treasured place?

Thanks to Mrs. Taylor, the Society was ready to assume stewardship, not just conserving, but developing its potential. Although the property was donated by Mr. Curtis, the Society needed to raise funds – initially \$250,000 – as an endowment. Mrs. Taylor was the general of this campaign, and Cambridge friends were faithful lieutenants. Of particular note was photographer-writer Barbara Paine, who lent her talents as a publicist. A regular contributor to the *Boston Globe* and the *New York Times*, Mrs. Paine described Curtis's effort to save Garden in the Woods from developers.¹³² Other Cambridge friends, particularly Edith Ross and her daughter Pat Pratt, gave their energy to fundraising.¹³³

The endowment funds were raised plus more, and in 1968, the Society moved to Garden in the Woods. Three members of the newly merged Cambridge Plant & Garden Club were subsequently recognized with awards from the New England Wild Flower Society – Annette Cottrell (Conservation, 1970), Catherine Hammond (Outstanding Service, 1976), and Barbara Paine (Outstanding Service, 1977).

Feature 22

Wild Flower Illustrations by Cambridge Garden Club Member Catherine R. Hammond

From Kathryn S. Taylor and Stephen F. Hamblin, *Handbook of Wild Flower Cultivation: A Guide to Wild Flower Cultivation in the Home Garden* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1963).



Trillium grandiflorum
(Great or Snow Trillium)



Monarda didyma (Oswego-tea or Bee-balm)



Hibiscus palustris
(Swamp-Rose-Mallow)



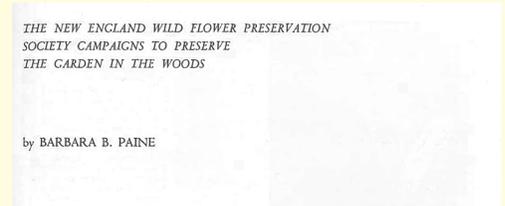
Eupatorium purpureum
(Sweet-Joe-Pye-weed)

Feature 23

Cambridge Plant Club Member Barbara Paine Campaigns for Garden in the Woods

Barbara B. Paine, "The New England Wild Flower Preservation Society Campaigns to Preserve the Garden in the Woods," *Horticulture* (October 1964), p. 31.

Mrs. Paine continued to promote Garden in the Woods after the Society moved to Framingham. See Barbara B. Paine, "Some of Nature's Wildings Bloom in Summer," *New York Times*, July 11, 1971.



Mrs. Taylor's service as president ended in 1973. Over the next years, the close connection that she forged with the CP&GC gradually ended. Now, the bond that once existed between the Society and the Plant Club is a living memory only with our club's nonagenarians. Of course, members of the club enjoy trips to Garden in the Woods, on scheduled group tours and as individuals, particularly during Trillium Week, as well as lectures by its experts. Recently, the club has contracted with the Native Plant Trust experts to conduct botanic surveys at two DCR properties in Cambridge. But the traffic on roads between Cambridge and Framingham is an impediment to spur-of-the-moment trips to Garden in the Woods.

Conclusion

I hope that this essay strengthens the connection between the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club and Native Plant Trust by restoring memories of the historical connection between the two organizations – a connection based on a mutual passion for native plants. When I began the project, I imagined that my research would be a short feature in a history of the Plant Club, perhaps with an image of the Society’s 1903 membership list highlighting Plant Club names and a short profile of the Society’s first president. As I uncovered information, I set out to write a fuller history of that first native plant society and its successor. One of the pleasures of the writing was to add recognition of people and institutions who have gone largely unrecognized. A case in point is Feature 24 which provides a corrected list of the Society’s presidents.¹³⁴

It is impressive when an organization is able to continue for decades and then pass the century mark as the Native Plant Trust has done. As the Trust approaches its 125th birthday, it is stronger than ever. However, the stories in this essay show that its longevity was not foreordained. Its successes and evolution were the work of a series of dedicated leaders – Professor Jackson; the GCA’s Mrs. Farwell and Mrs. Sloan; Massachusetts Horticultural Society president Mr. Burrage; and then a succession of GCA-inspired presidents Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Jackson, and Mrs. Taylor. Each of them had a capacity to bring others to the mission. Each was aided by a degree of good luck, but as Louis Pasteur famously said, “Chance favors the prepared mind.” And so, thanks to extraordinary individuals, one after another, fortune favored the Society for the Protection for Native Plants, then the New England Wild Flower Society, and today Native Plant Trust.

Feature 24

Corrected List of Society Presidents, 1901–1977

Robert Tracy Jackson, President
Society for the Protection of Native Plants, 1901–1922

Henrietta (Rita) Crosby, Chair
Society for the Preservation of Native New England
Plants, 1922–1932

Henrietta (Rita) Crosby, President, New England Wild
Flower Preservation Society, 1932–1948

Elizabeth Lejée Perry Richardson, President
New England Wild Flower Preservation Society,
1948–1949

Katharine Mitchell Jackson, President
New England Wild Flower Preservation Society,
1949–1951

Kathryn (Kitty) Sears Taylor, President
New England Wild Flower Preservation Society,
1951–1973

Juliet Richardson Kellogg French, President
New England Wild Flower Society, 1973–1977

Notes:

*Juliet French was the daughter of Elizabeth Richardson.
Robert Jackson and Katharine Jackson were not related.*

Postscript on the Search for the Records

My search took me in several directions. The first step was to contact the New England Wild Flower Society to inquire about the records of its mother organization. Maybe NEWFS had the Society's early membership lists with the names of Cambridge Plant Club members! A trip to the home of the NEWFS in Framingham took me to a small room. There were no administrative records such as membership lists, from the SPNP years. However, two scrapbooks and a complete set of leaflets (Nos. 1–33) from 1901 to 1921 provided considerable information about the Society's public work.

Where else to look for the records of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants? The Society's corresponding secretary, Miss Maria E. Carter, from its founding until 1915, was the curator of the herbarium at the Boston Society of Natural History, and she handled native plant correspondence from there. The Society of Natural History later became the Boston Museum of Science. Might the records of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants have found their way to the Museum of Science? The answer is, yes, possibly. The Museum does have the records of the Society of Natural History. Unfortunately, they are resting in boxes, uncatalogued, and not currently accessible.

Or could the records of the Society be in the archives of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society? The MHS became the home of the Society in 1922, and the organization remained in residence for over four decades until 1968, when the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society acquired Garden in the Woods and moved to Framingham. I visited the Horticultural Society's library, now at Elm Bank in Wellesley, but the director could find no records. As with the Museum of Science, it is possible that there are records in uncatalogued boxes.

Another avenue of search were the libraries at Harvard, where Robert T. Jackson, the longtime president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, was a professor and curator. Might the Society's records be in Professor Jackson's papers in the Harvard archives? No, I did not find the records of the Society, though there were some papers that contributed to this essay.

Did Harvard hold records of the Society's other early officers? The widow of the great botanist Asa Gray – Jane Loring Gray – was honorary president of the Society. Further two eminent Harvard botanists – Professors Benjamin L. Robinson and George L. Goodale – served as vice presidents of the Society. And Professor

Merrit L. Fernald contributed papers to the Society. Might the library at the Gray Herbarium have any of their records relating to the Society? But again, no results.

And another option – the New England Botanical Club. Professors Fernald, Goodale, and Robinson were prominent members of the New England Botanical Club. Might some of their papers relating to the Society have gone there? An archivist at the Harvard University Herbaria library, where the Club's archives are held, searched, but found no mention of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants.

As noted above, it is possible that some records of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants exist at the Science Museum and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Nor have all of the historical records at Native Plant Trust have been cataloged. Archival grants to those organizations might produce records that would add to the story of the Society and the people who sustained the Society from 1901 to 1922.

Endnotes

1 In 1966, the Cambridge Plant Club (founded 1889) merged with the Cambridge Garden Club (founded in 1938) to form the name Cambridge Plant & Garden Club.

2 The iris became a specialty of Jackson's. *Iris reticulata*, or Dwarf Iris, is a native of Turkey and the Caucasian Mountains, four-inches tall with grass-like leaves and a violet-blue or purple flower with yellow markings that blooms from late winter to early spring, suggesting an effect of butterflies hovering low to the ground. Each flower lasts from three to seven days, so with a gradual succession, this iris will bloom for three weeks.

For a number of years, Jackson was listed as a specialty iris grower in the January issues of the *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*.

3 Cornell University professor, Liberty Hyde Bailey, Jr. (1858–1954), studied under Asa Gray in the 1880s, and likely knew some early members of the Cambridge Plant Club. He was an extraordinary figure, both scientific botanist and practical horticulturist and gardener, as well as early environmental. Bailey wrote skillfully and prolifically, over a long career; his writings are still appreciated today. In fact, *The Liberty Hyde Bailey Gardener's Companion: Essential Writings*, came out in 2019.

4 An assortment of errors are contained in the NEWFS publication, Frances H. Clark and Mary M. Walker, "Plant Preservation: An Historical Perspective," *Wild Flower Notes*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Fall/Winter 1985). The NEWFS's centennial publication introduced further errors in its narrative of the Society's early years (*New England Wild Flower, 100 Years: Conservation Notes of the New England Wild Flower Society*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2001).

5 As an example, the Society's 1985 newsletter history – with uncorrected errors – was reprinted in *On The Fringe: Journal of the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (December 2008). More errors appear in "Recipes for Natives," by Marty Carlock in "Ninety Years of Championing Natives" in the American Horticultural Society's journal, *American Horticulturist*, Vol. 70, No. 2 February 1991: 18–24. And most recently, in November 2018, an article by Roxi Thoren in *Places Journal*, "Dreaming True," repeats misinformation about the founding of the Society.

6 Not all of the Society's records at Native Plant Trust have been cataloged. Although I reviewed the organized files, items of interest may yet come to light when uncatalogued materials are processed. Similarly, the Museum of Science holds uncatalogued records from the Boston Museum of Natural History,

where the Society maintained an office for 15 years. These records may also reveal new material when they are processed. Finally, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, home to the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society until its move to Framingham, has uncatalogued archives that may relate to the NEWFPS.

7 The loss of woodlands was giving rise to a forestry conservation movement. In Boston, forest preservation had a local advocate in eminent dendrologist Charles Sprague Sargent (1841–1927), founding director of the Arnold Arboretum. In 1896, Sargent chaired a forestry study committee of the American Academy of Arts and Science that included Gifford Pinchot (1865–1946), future first chief of the US Forest Service.

The preservation of trees in cities and towns was also increasing as a topic of discussion. In 1891, Harvard botanist Dr. Farlow called attention to the destruction of shade trees on country roadsides and the streets of villages, towns and cities, which he ascribed to the gross indifference of the town and city fathers and the public generally, who allowed telegraph and telephone men to mutilate the branches, the horses of the milkman or grocer to gnaw the bark and ignorant officials to prune the trees, or even on the slightest pretext, to cut them down. His words still resonate: "It is all very well to talk about the protection of forests and the formation of National Parks in distant states. But we have our own forests, which are the trees in our streets and public grounds, and before turning our eyes in other directions, we had better see what is needed at home...to a few of our new England towns owe their prosperity as summer resorts to the arching elms and rounded maples whose loss no money could replace...an effort should be made to secure legislation which shall make compulsory the placing of guards around trees in exposed places. Furthermore, the care of trees in public grounds should be entrusted only to persons specially trained for the purpose" (W.G. Farlow, "Diseases of Trees Likely to Follow Mechanical Injuries," read before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, March 7, 1891).

8 A scrapbook in the archives of Native Plant Trust includes a variety of newspaper clippings that appeared in the year before the Society for the Protection of Native Plants was founded. Among the papers were the *Boston Transcript*, the *Dedham Transcript*, *Inquirer and Mirror* (Nantucket), and the *Springfield Daily Republican*. Taken together, they give a good account of rare flowers that should not be picked or dug, and those that grew more abundantly.

9 “Some Twentieth-Century Problems,” address by Vice-President William Trelease before the Section of Botany, American Association for the Advancement of Science, New York Meeting, June 1900, in the *Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*, Vol. XLIX (1900), and also in *Science*, Vol. 12, No. 289 (July 13, 1900): 48-62. The conclusion of Professor Trelease’s talk was reprinted in *The Plant World*, Vol. III, No. 7 (July 1900): 108

Known for his early work in bacteriology, Trelease was a specialist in the taxonomy of flowering plants. See Louis Otto Kunkel, “William Trelease, 1857–1945: A Biographical Memoir,” National Academy of Sciences, 1961.

10 “Outdoor Books,” *The New York Times*, June 9, 1900.

The release of Neltje Blanchan’s book at the same time as Professor Trelease’s lecture was opportune, but her book was only the latest in a series of botanical guides written by women. Mabel Osgood Wright published at least a dozen popular nature books between the early 1890s and 1910. Also, popular was Alice Lounsberry’s *A Guide to the Wild Flowers*, illustrated by a woman artist, published in 1899.

11 The Massachusetts Audubon Society was founded in 1896 by two women, Harriet Lawrence Hemenway and Minna B. Hall, who persuaded Boston ladies of fashion to forgo the cruelly harvested plumage that adorned their hats. They enlisted Cambridge ornithologist William Brewster (1851–1919), a founder of the American Ornithologists’ Union, to serve as the organization’s president and leader in the campaign for legislation to restrict the killing of birds and sale of their plumage.

12 “Preserve the Wild Flowers,” *The Inquirer and Mirror* [Nantucket] (September 1, 1900). In August 1900, Mrs. Maria L. Owen, a woman of great accomplishment, particularly botanical, called upon the concerned residents of Nantucket to protect rare natives such as the arbutus. A committee was formed and at least one meeting was held. In 1888, Mrs. Owen who had grown up on the island, published a catalogue of plant species and varieties growing on Nantucket. See Walter Deane, “Maria L. Owen,” *Rhodora*, Vol. 16, No. 189 (September 1914): 152–160, and Beatrice Scheer Smith, “Maria L. Owen, Nineteenth-Century Nantucket Botanist,” *Rhodora*, Vol. 89, No. 858 (April 1987): 227–239.

Note: An unpublished history item in the archives of Native Plant Trust states erroneously that the first meeting of Society

for the Protection of Native Plants was held on Nantucket on September 1, 1900. This error seems to be based on a misreading of *The Inquirer and Mirror* article.

13 Robert Tracy Jackson, “The Protection of Native Plants,” read before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society on March 5, 1904, in *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Transactions for the Year 1903, Part II*, 1904, pp. 111–117.

Professor Jackson provided a full description of the threats facing native plants in different locales, but he did not elaborate on the founding of the Society or its first steps as an organization. He said only: “In the year 1900 a few ladies in Boston inaugurated the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, with the expressed idea of trying to do something to check the commercial sale and the needless, often thoughtless, destruction of native plants.”

It is disappointing that Jackson did not characterize the founding women or how they came together. If he had, we might have been able to connect the dots with Professor Trelease’s speech. There were more than a few Boston women who might have read accounts of the speech in the newspapers or the speech itself – women who were highly knowledgeable in things botanical and created herbaria as systematically as their male counterparts. The records of the Gray Herbarium, with its many contributions from women, give a sense of an active community of women plant experts who lived in or near Boston, as do the records of the Cambridge Plant Club.

Eighty years after Jackson’s article, NEWFS authors, Clark and Walker, addressed the question of founding women (Footnote 4). They stated that Harvard botanists *and their wives* [emphasis added] were the movers behind the society. Apart from Mrs. Asa Gray, who had been widowed in 1888, there is no evidence that the wives of any other Harvard botanists were involved in the Society’s early days. If Harvard professors had been in the founding group, Professor Jackson would surely have credited them in his 1904 speech.

14 Many newspaper articles have been saved in the scrapbook in the archives at Native Plant Trust.

Articles in scientifically oriented journals included:

- Charles E. Bessey, “Popularizing the Study of Ferns,” *Science*, Vol. XIV, No. 348 (August 30, 1901): 332–333. Professor Bessey of the University of Nebraska, a well-known academic botanist who had studied at Harvard with Asa Gray, praised the

objective of the new society, namely, “to check the wholesale destruction of our native plants.” He continued, “Every botanist will wish this society the greatest success... The urgent need of such a society is apparent not only in the densely populated Eastern States, but fully as much in the western summer resorts, where the hand of the vandal has already exterminated some species.”

- “Plant Protection,” *The American Botanist: Devoted to Economic and Ecological Botany*, Vol. I, No. 3 (September 1901): 44.

- *The American Botanist*, published monthly, was addressed to the “Plant Lover.”

- News column [Item on the founding of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants], *Torreya: A Monthly Journal of Botanical Notes and News*, Vol. I, No. 9 (September 1901): 111. Published from 1901 to 1945, *Torreya* was the journal of the Torrey Botanical Society. The Society was founded in honor of Columbia College Professor John Torrey as an informal organization in the 1860s. Incorporated in 1871, it is the oldest botanical society in the United States.

- *The Plant World* announced the formation of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, as well as its first leaflet, in its October 1901 issue, and provided further publicity two months later in an editorial: “The Society for the Preservation [*sic*] of Native Plants” Briefer Articles, *The Plant World*, Vol. IV, No. 10 (October 1901): 192, and Editorial, *The Plant World*, Vol. IV, No. 12 (December 1901): 237. (The October article was also the first to err in citing the Society’s name, using the word “Preservation” in place of “Protection” in the title, though the name appeared correctly in the text.)

Articles in specialized journals included the following:

- “To Protect Native Plants” in *Park and Cemetery*, Vol. XI, No. 10 (December 1901): 186.

- “Protection of Wild Flowers,” *Country Life in America: A Magazine for the Home-maker, the Vacation-seeker, the Gardener, the Farmer, the Nature-teacher, the Naturalist*, Vol. I, No. 5 (March 1902): lxxxiv.

- The *Christian Register* (later renamed the *Unitarian Register*) was widely read at the time, offering articles not only on religion, but also on politics and other current issues.

The Society’s Amy Folsom was the daughter of a Unitarian minister, a point of connection that she had in common with several members of the Cambridge Plant Club.

- “Nature and Science for Young Folks,” *St. Nicholas*, Vol. XXIX, No. 8 (June 1902): 744–747. (The issue’s lead story was a Jack London’ adventure, “To Repel Boards.”)

15 This circular is included in a scrapbook at Native Plant Trust. It was also published in *The Christian Register*, a publication of the Unitarian Universalist Society on July 17, 1902.

16 Note from Miss Amy Folsom to Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby, September 1922.

17 Miss Folsom and Professor Jackson were second cousins. Miss Folsom's mother, née Susan Cabot Jackson, was related to the wife of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, née Amelia Lee Jackson (1818–1888). According to papers in the Harvard archives, the professor was also related to Holmes's wife, who was the daughter of the Hon. Charles Jackson (1775–1855), who had served as an Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and the niece of Dr. James Jackson (1877–1867). (Oliver Wendell Holmes had been Dr. Jackson's student.) Robert T. Jackson's father was a nephew of Dr. James Jackson, and Miss Folsom's mother, Sarah Cabot Jackson was a niece of Dr. Jackson's, which made Robert T. Jackson and Amy Folsom second cousins. Miss Folsom was buried with these kinsmen in the Jackson family plot at Mount Auburn Cemetery, as were Dr. Holmes and his wife:

18 Jane Lathrop Loring Gray (1821–1909), the daughter of a prominent Boston lawyer, married the Harvard botanist Asa Gray in 1848. She took an active interest in her husband's scientific pursuits, for more on which see her archives at the Harvard Herbarium and the Darwin Correspondence Project at the University of Cambridge. Mrs. Gray also had a familial relation to the Jackson clan, through her sister's marriage to another Jackson – Patrick Tracy Jackson – who made his mark in textile manufacturing.

19 According to the 47th Annual Report of the Secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture (published in 1900), Frank A. [Alpine] Hill (1841–1903), was Secretary to the State Board of Education. Hill held an Litt.D., and a Cambridge resident. Formerly Head Master of the English High School in Cambridge, and later of the Mechanic Arts High School in Boston, Hill was a member of the Cambridge Club. That club's records at the Cambridge Historical Society include a remembrance of Hill's life.

20 *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1868*, p. 27.

21 It is this note, written by Miss Folsom to Mrs. Crosby, that was quoted in the centennial publication of the New England Wild Flower Society. The note, dated September 6 [1922], opens, "I can give you vague personal recollections, – not [emphasis in text] for

publication!" Apart from her memory of having had the idea for a society, Miss Folsom's recollections are definitely partial ones. The mention of Miss Folsom's aunt, Marion C. Jackson, underscores the family connections with Professor Jackson. Miss Jackson would have been a first cousin of Professor Jackson's father.

Miss Folsom stated the records of the Society's meetings had been given to Mrs. Crosby's office, and that Miss Margaret Allen's scrapbooks, would soon be delivered. I did not find the records of meetings at Native Plant Trust, but Miss Allen's scrapbooks are in its archives.

22 Letters in Miss Allen's scrapbook indicate that Miss Morse played a lead role. In 1922, Miss Folsom and her aunt came to live with Miss Allen and Miss Frances Morse, at 12 Marlborough. Miss Morse, whose mother was Harriet Jackson (Lee) Morse, was also apparently a cousin of Miss Folsom and her aunt. See *Genealogies of Back Bay Houses*, an online publication of *backbayhouses.org*.

23 Joseph A. Cushman, "In Memoriam: Robert Tracy Jackson, 1861–1948," *Science*, Vol. 109 (January 28, 1949): 93–94; Elisabeth Deichmann, "Memorial to Robert Tracy Jackson," *Proceedings Volume of the Geological Society of America Annual Report for 1951* (July 1952): 117–120, pl. 11; "R.T. Jackson, Paleontologist Dead at 87," *The Boston Herald*, October 26, 1948.

For a profile of the various Jackson family physicians, see Howard A. Kelly and Walter L. Burrage, *American Medical Biographies*, Baltimore, The Norman, Remington Company (1920).

Jackson's father, John Barnard Swett Jackson (1806–1879) was curator of the Boston Society for Medical Improvement's curator. In 1847, Dr. Jackson published a catalogue on the specimens in the Society's collection (then numbering 954). Around 1870, Jackson facilitated the transfer of the collection to the Harvard Medical School's Warren Museum. See "John Barnard Swett Jackson," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. 14 (May 1878–May 1879): 344–352.

24 Jackson also applied his curatorial energy to horticulture. In 1888, he published two articles on labeling trees and plants in the Society's *Transactions*. Jackson's work was also described in *Garden and Forest* (May 23, 1888): 146. The article opens: "A thoroughly satisfactory label for a plant has not been invented; and yet a good label is one of the most important elements of a good garden. It should be indestructible, cheap and unabrasive,

and it should be made of a material upon which ordinary writing will be durable and legible."

25 Robert T. Jackson, "John Richardson: His House and Garden," *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1904, Part I* (1904): 159–202.

John Richardson made Boston the first center of peony culture in America. "He had the divine gift of penetration. Somehow he knew whereabouts to select his seed and what plants to use for cross fertilization in order to produce a marvelous type of progeny." Although Richardson received many awards from the Massachusetts Horticulture Society during his lifetime, he named very few of his originations. Said Jackson, "He never in my experience spoke of any of his seedling peonies by name, but called them the early white, pink or crimson, etc. Mr. Richardson never kept any garden records as far as I am aware; but many details preceding my own time are gathered from my father's garden catalogue, which, beginning in 1857, contains at that and later dates many entries of plants received from Mr. Richardson. Accordingly, Jackson and another horticultural friend, John C. Hovey, later named most of his originations, including two for Richardson himself – 'John Richardson' and 'Richardson's Perfection'.

The section of Jackson's paper on John Richardson's peonies was reprinted in *Gardening* (October 1, 1905): 18–20, and *The American Florist* (September 23, 1905): 378–380.

26 The house was also described by Jackson in some detail. Sadly, it was razed in 1898, and the site, including John Richardson's gardens, gave way to apartments.

27 Robert T. Jackson, "John Richardson: His House and Garden," p. 172.

28 Jackson's paper devotes nine pages and four plates to Richardson's peonies. Said Jackson, Richardson "cherished them as the pride of the garden, which indeed they were... It was a treat to go into Mr. Richardson's garden with him in peony season. He would talk of his favorites with the spirit of an enthusiast, undimmed by advancing years, and even when not in bloom the flower in all its perfection was before his mind's eye and he would discuss them as he passed the plants in a walk about the garden."

29 See *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1884, Part II*, 1885, pp. 277–287. The committee commended Jackson's system of labeling as being "the best we have ever seen. Keeping the names of plants with accuracy is one of the most important

and difficult cares of a large collection; but Mr. Jackson has surmounted it effectually. It is rare to see so much in so small a place, with such admirable system, and certainly the fact that it does not require a large place to possess an interesting collection of plants has been thoroughly demonstrated, and the wonder is that more have not gone and done likewise. We are glad to introduce Mr. Jackson to the Society through this report.”

30 See *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1884, Part II*, 1885, p. 235. Jackson had a broad ranging interest in plants, but he was constant in striving for excellence. For example, in 1886, Jackson was awarded a First Class Certificate of Merit for *Primula viscosa* var. *nivalis*, and also showed a collection of polyanthus primroses. “Report of the Committee on Plants and Flowers for the Year 1886,” *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1886, Part I*, p. 250.

31 *Science*, Vol. 3, No. 71 (June 13, 1884): 712–713.

32 *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1885, Part I*, “Bulbs and Tubers for Out-Door Culture: Discussion,” February 13, 1886, pp. 77–78.

33 R.T. Jackson, “Cultivation of Native Ferns,” Parts 1–3, *Garden and Forest*, Vol. 1, No. 27 (August 29, 1888): 317–18; Vol. 1, No. 28 (September 5, 1888): 330–31; Vol. 1, No. 29 (September 12, 1888): 41. Jackson recommended gardening with ferns for their foliage. He advised on how to collect ferns from the wild and re-establish them in the garden, reporting that more than 50 native species might be successfully cultivated in the Boston vicinity.

34 The Jacksons’ address during their first ten years of marriage was 33 Gloucester Street. The Back Bay was also home to Miss Amy Folsom.

35 Massachusetts Horticultural Society, *Transactions of the Year 1904, Part II*, p. 198. Professor Jackson received a second prize (in the category of best Garden of Peonies, not commercial) of \$20, the first prize of \$30 going to Dr. Charles S. Minot in Milton with 260–270 varieties.

36 “Annual Meeting for the Year 1904,” *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*, pp. 339–340.

37 The paper, dated August 23, 1904, in *Transactions of Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1904*, pp. 141–157.

38 Robert Tracy Jackson, “A *Cypridedium Long* in Cultivation,” *Horticulture*, July 15, 1930, p. 345.

39 *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1884, Part II*, 1885, pp. 277–287.

40 Robert Tracy Jackson, “An Exceptionally Large *Onoclea sensibilis*,” *Rhodora*, Vol. 32, No. 383 (November, 1930): 225–226

41 B.L. Robinson, “The Protection of Our Native Flora,” *Rhodora*, Vol. 4, No. 43, (July 1902): 139–142. *Rhodora* was the journal of the New England Botanical Club.

Benjamin Lincoln Robinson (1864–1935) was Asa Gray Professor of Systematic Botany and Curator of the Gray Herbarium, Harvard University. A Harvard graduate, Robinson earned his doctorate from the University of Strasbourg. For an account of Robinson’s life, see M.L. Fernald, “Biographical Memoir of Benjamin Lincoln Robinson, 1864–1935,” National Academy of Sciences, Volume XVII, Thirteenth Memoir, presented to the Academy at the Annual Meeting,

42 Flower missions – bringing baskets were filled with flowers and fruit from the gardens of wealthy people to the poor and the sick – were found in many American cities in the last quarter of the 1800s and well into the next century. The Benevolent Fraternity Fruit and Flower Mission was a Boston institution. Cambridge also had a flower mission.

43 Editorial in the *Cambridge Chronicle*, May 16, 1903, p. 2. The advocate who contacted the editor of the *Chronicle* was Mrs. Rufus P. Williams, the chair of the Cantabrigia Club. The Cantabrigia Club was an educational and philanthropic woman’s club that flourished in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Founded by a woman journalist in 1892 as an outgrowth of current events classes for women, the club was a valuable ally of the new society. -

44 These articles are available in the archives of the Native Plant Trust thanks to Miss Margaret E. Allen, who became the corresponding secretary of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants around 1904, and began keeping scrapbooks of articles on the native plant cause even earlier.

45 For example, a monthly journal published by women’s clubs, *The Federation Bulletin*, announced that two or more new leaflets would be published in the spring of 1904.

46 For a sample of the publicity surrounding the talk, see “Wild Flowers Vanish” in *Primary Education* (April 1905), p. 182. A synopsis of Professor Jackson’s talk was given in “Protection of Native Plants,” *City and State* [Philadelphia] (March 17, 1904), p. 162. It was also mentioned in the *Proceedings of the*

Columbus Horticultural Society (1904): 31–36; and “Protection of Native Plants,” in the British journal, *The Garden: An Illustrated Weekly Journal of Gardening*, No. 1730, Vol. LXVII (January 14, 1905): 19.

47 “A League of Massachusetts Improvement Societies,” *Park and Cemetery and Landscape Gardening*, Vol. XIV, No. 3 (May 1904): 46–47. The article documents the wide interest in village improvement, including by landscape architects, such as Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., J. Randolph Coolidge, Jr., and Warren Manning.

48 The gift – designated as the Olivia E. and Caroline Phelps Stokes Fund for the Protection of Native Plants – was made by two sisters from a wealthy and philanthropic family. Their record of well-considered giving included the education of African Americans, orphanages, and housing for the poor and elderly. Much of their philanthropy was directed to social causes and buildings for colleges and churches. However, in 1929, after the death of Caroline Phelps Stokes, her sister Olivia gave a park to the City of Redlands, California, in her sister’s memory. Nearly 17 acres, the park was intended as a preserve for native plants and wildflowers. It remains a botanical nature garden and is a fitting memorial to both sisters. The Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute holds some of the sisters’ papers. [MC 188 Papers of Caroline and Olivia Phelps Stokes, 1892–1927]

49 The founding of the New York group is described in “The Wild Flower Preservation Society,” *The Plant World* (May 1902): 94–97, and Frederick V. Coville, “The Wild Flower Preservation Society: Annual Report of the Board of Managers,” *The Plant World* (June 1902): 228–229.

The founding is credited to Mrs. Britton, a brilliant biologist (specialized in the study of mosses), who remained a driving force behind the organization until the mid-1920s. Mrs. Britton was also a friend to the wild flower preservation efforts of The Garden Club of America after its founding in 1913.

Frederick Vernon Coville, chief botanist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was elected president; Charles Louis Pollard, editor of *The Plant World*, secretary; and Elizabeth Britton a member of its board of managers.

Over the next years, other members of the board included Charles Edwin Bessey, botanist from the Midwest, who had studied at Harvard with Asa Gray; Liberty Hyde Bailey, the botanist-horticulturist whose writings circulated widely, including with the members of the Plant Club; William Trelease,

who had called for local societies in 1900; Charles Frederick Millsbaugh, an expert in medicinal plants; and Alice Eastwood, the famed California botanist, who later spent time at the Gray Herbarium and was a friend to the Cambridge Plant Club.

The records of the Wild Flower Preservation Society are archived at the New York Botanical Garden.

50 *The Plant World*, Vol. V, No. 4 (April 1902): 61–66. The first-prize essay also appeared in the *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*, Vol. III, No. 27 (1902). Frank H. Knowlton (1860–1926) was curator in the department of paleobiology at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, and a gardener by avocation. Charles Louis Pollard, “Frank Hall Knowlton,” *The Plant World*, Vol. 5, No. 9 (September 1902), pp. 168–170

51 *The Plant World: A Monthly Journal of Popular Botany* (Official Organ of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America), Vol. V, No. 5 (May 1902): 81–87. Miss Clarke’s second-prize essay was reprinted from the *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*. A learned “amateur,” Cora Huidekoper Clark (1851–1916) made contributions to the fields of both botany and entomology. She maintained associations with the herbarium at Harvard, and was member with the Cambridge Entomological Club, the Boston Society of Natural History, and the Botany Group of the New England Women’s Club. Her research archives are located at Harvard and the University of Michigan. On February 20, 1905, Miss Clarke gave a talk entitled “Waste Land Wandering” to the Cambridge Plant Club.

52 *The Plant World*, Vol. V, No. 6 (June 1902): 101–106, reprinted from the *Journal of the New York Botanical Society*. Abel Joel Grout (1867–1947) was a specialist in mosses, and a founding member, with Mrs. Britton, of the association that became the American Bryological and Lichenological Society.

53 Special dispatch to the *Boston Herald*, Hartford, Conn., in Miss Allen’s scrapbook at Native Plant Trust.

54 See report on the fourth annual meeting of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants in *The Plant World*, Vol. VIII, No. 11 (November 1905): 285–286. See also, “Native Plants,” *The Country Gentleman* (March 30, 1905), p. 300.

55 For a report on the fifth annual meeting of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, see Margaret Allen, “Meeting of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants,” *The Plant World*, Vol. IX, No. 5 (May 1906): 119–121.

56 George E. Davenport (1833–1907) was not a professor, but he possessed extensive botanical knowledge. In 1875, he published *Flora of Medford*, and in 1879, a catalogue to the “Davenport Herbarium” of North American Ferns (North of Mexico). Recently, he has been given overdue recognition for his role in the creation of the Middlesex Falls Reservation. See, for example, “A Lecture on the Middlesex Fells” with 100 stereopticon views, a lecture that he published in 1893, and gave to various clubs.

57 Leaflet No. 8 “Consider the Lily of the Field” by Margaret Deland was reprinted in *The American Botanist* under “Note and Comment,” and also in the August 1904 issue of *The Plant World*. Mrs. Deland’s leaflet opens, “It surprising that church decoration displays sometimes so little ‘consideration’ for the lily of the field!...” And closes, “This effort to protect our native wild flowers may well begin in the church, taking as the text that we are to ‘consider the lily,’ – not in large and meaningless bunches, not in the passing beauty of its violent death through careless human hands, but we are to consider the lily of the fields, *how it grows!*”

Mrs. Deland (née Margaret Campbell, 1857–1945) was a well-known Boston writer and poet. (Her first poetry collection was *The Garden and Other Verses*.) She was in the first group of women elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters. In addition to her writing, she was deeply involved in charitable work. It is interesting that she lent her pen to the cause of wild flower protection. Margaret Deland’s home at 76 Mt. Vernon Street is a stop on the Boston Women’s Heritage Trail. For a profile of Margaret Deland, see Chloe Morse-Harding’s essay in the Boston Athenæum Authors series .

58 A note in the Massachusetts Horticultural Society yearbook for 1904 explains that the leaflet was originally prepared around 1902 by Professor Samuel F. Clarke, naturalist, and Mrs. Frances Theodora Parsons, wild flower guide book author. The article, which followed Professor Jackson’s paper, was reprinted from *Rhodora*, Vol. 5, No. 58 (October 1903): 259–269.

59 Miss Streeter’s essay was originally published in the March 1905 issue of *The Plant World*, pp. 76–78. Miss Streeter continued botanical work : In 1915, she was a registered student at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, investigating inherited characteristics of corn.

60 Excerpts from Okakura Kakuzō’s *The Book of Tea*, Chapter VI, Flowers, 1906. In his writings (many in English), Okakura compared Oriental to Western art. In *The Book of Tea*, Okakura addressed floral artistry, contrasting the “wanton waste of flowers” in America and Europe with the economy of “Eastern Flower Masters.”

An art scholar and critic, Okakura Kakuzō (1862 or 1863–1913) was an advocate for Japan’s traditional art forms and cultural heritage in reaction to the drive to modernization and westernization of the early Meiji Restoration. At Tokyo Imperial University, he met and studied with Harvard-educated Ernest Fenellosa. A founder of the Tokyo Fine Arts School and later of the Japan Art Institute, he traveled abroad frequently. Outside of Japan, his friendships influenced figures such as Swami Vivekananda, Isabella Stewart Gardner, and Ezra Pound.

In 1904, Boston Japanophile William Sturges Bigelow invited Okakura to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts to help catalogue the extensive collection of Japanese and Chinese art at the museum. Upon his arrival in Boston, Okakura was hosted by former member of the Cambridge Plant Club, Sara Bull at her home on Brattle Street. He stayed with Mrs. Bull from March 1904 until May 1905, when he departed for Japan on an art buying trip. On his return to Boston, Okakura moved to Isabella Stewart Gardner’s home.

Independent in spirit, Okakura had a talent for amusing friends is documented in Mrs. Gardner’s records. In January 1906, Okakura became the curator of the MFA’s Asian art department, with the understanding that his presence would be sporadic.

For more on Okakura’s Boston years, see John Rosenfield, “Okakura Kakuzō and Margaret Noble (Sister Nivedita): A Brief Episode,” *Review of Japanese Culture and Society*, Vol. 24, Beyond Tenshin: Okakura Kakuzō’s Multiple Legacies (December 2012), pp. 58–69, and Victoria Weston, *East Meets West: Isabella Stewart Gardner and Okakura Kakuzō*, December 10, 1992 to April 18, 1993, in *Exploring Treasures in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum V*, posted February 2, 2015.

61 William Palmer describes several parks – in Portland, Oregon, Vancouver, British Columbia; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and an island in the Potomac River. He advocates for setting aside tracts of wild land – small or large – in every community, leaving nature to “find her own way,” with the role of man to “fix the boundaries and protect the effort.”

62 Clarence H. Knowlton (1876–1956) was an enthusiastic amateur botanist, whose interest in unusual plants began when he was a boy growing up in Farmington, Maine. A Harvard graduate, he began his career as a teacher and then moved to publishing. Otherwise, he was an avid explorer of local flora – his thoroughness evident in the many sheets in the New England Botanical Club’s herbarium, and in the papers that he contributed to *Rhodora* over many decades. At the time that his Society circular was published, he lived in Hingham. Ralph C. Bean, “Clarence Hinckley Knowlton,” *Rhodora*, Vol. 58, No. 690 (June 1956): 157–160.

63 A teacher by profession and instinct, Cambridge-raised and Harvard-educated, Walter Deane (1848–1930) was broadly interested in the natural world, but developed a passion for botany as a young man. By 1895, his dedication to botanical work increased to the point where he gave up teaching, except for small classes. Also, as this time, as a member of the Metropolitan Park Commission, working with Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, he began compiling and editing a list of the plants of the woodland reservations. An avid collector of botanical specimens, he identified plants of great interest and rarity, and was an early advocate the wild flower preservation movement. Deane was a charter member of the New England Botanical Club (formed in 1895), as well as Overseers’ Committee of the Harvard Department of Botany and on the Visiting Committee for the Gray Herbarium.

Deane was the first outside speaker to address the Plant Club, and he became a regular, addressing the club eight times between 1890 and 1916.

See B.L. Robinson, “Botanical Legacies of Walter Deane,” *Science* (October 31, 1930), and C.A. Weatherby, “Walter Deane” *Rhodora*, Vol. 35, No. 411 (March 1933): 69–80.

64 Sarah Orne Jewett’s letter of support was published by the Society after her death. A well-known writer, Jewett was an observer of the natural landscape of Maine and the regional flora around her South Berwick home. Gardens figured prominently in her fiction, and her letters are filled with reports on flowers, cultivated and wild, e.g., early sightings of trailing arbutus. See, Gwen L.

Nagel, “‘This prim corner of land where she was queen’: Sarah Orne Jewett’s New England Gardens,” *Colby Quarterly*, Volume 22, Issue 1 (March 1986): Article 7 (published online).

65 A San Franciscan, George T. Ruddock wrote of native plants of the Pacific. *Sierra Club Bulletin*, Vol. VIII, No. 3 (January 1912).

66 Born on Santee Dakota reservation in Minnesota, Charles Eastman Ohíye S’a (1858–1939) was raised to be hunter and warrior. His mother, the daughter of U.S. Army officer and a Dakota woman, died shortly after his birth. As a young child, he was separated from his father during the Dakota War of 1862, and raised by his grandparents. Ultimately, reunited with his father and older siblings, Eastman had to reconcile with his father’s conversion to Christianity and desire that his sons be educated in European-American schools. Accepting his father’s will, Charles (his Christian name) Eastman (his American grandfather’s name) followed an educational path that took him to Dartmouth and to medical school at Boston University. Eastman practiced medicine at reservations in South Dakota and then privately, but struggled to support his family. His European-American wife, Elaine Goodale, an Indian rights advocate, encouraged him to write his memoirs. His writing opened new opportunities to him along with considerable recognition. As a promoter of the fledgling Boy Scouts of America and the Camp Fire Girls, one of Eastman’s themes was living in peace with nature and wisdom in Indian ways. There is considerable information on Eastman, including photographs, thanks to his writings and those of his wife. The family archives are at Smith College.

67 Joseph Edgar (J.E. or Ed) Chamberlin (1851–1935) was a well-known journalist who wrote a popular daily column that reached readers in Boston, New York, and Chicago.

68 Professor Trelease, a student of Goodale’s at Harvard, wrote this of his former teacher: “It was my privilege frequently to listen to his brilliant lectures which I have never heard surpassed in their field.” As quoted by Robert T. Jackson in “George Lincoln Goodale,” *Harvard Graduates’ Magazine*, Vol. 32, No. 125 (September 1923): 54–59.

69 George Lincoln Goodale, *Wild Flowers of America* with 50 colored plates by Isaac Sprague, Boston: S.E. Cassino (1882).

Isaac Sprague (1811–1895) was one of the most respected American illustrators of the 19th century. A native of Massachusetts, Sprague was born in Hingham and died in what is now the town of Wellesley. Although he was

a largely self-taught artist, he gained early attention for his illustrations and paintings. His talent was noted by John James Audubon, who invited him to join a 1843 expedition up the Missouri River to the Yellowstone River. Upon his return, Sprague traveled through northern New England, working on a series of images for a book on the scenery of the White Mountains, which was published in 1848. In 1844, Sprague began to work with Asa Gray at Harvard University, creating the illustrations for Gray’s lectures. These illustrations were published with Gray’s botanical works. Sprague’s connection with Gray led to illustration work on geographical surveys of the Southwest. In addition to his association with Professor Goodale, Sprague illustrated George Barrell Emerson’s book on the trees and shrubs growing naturally in the forests of Massachusetts.

For more on Isaac Sprague, visit the Wellesley Historical Society which has a collection of his drawings, notebooks, and papers, and the Boston Athenæum, which has a collection of his watercolors (birds) and drawings (plants, flowers, and insects).

70 Mr. Martin was versed in horticulture as well as the teaching of civics and history. Martin saw a school garden as the most effective laboratory that either an elementary school or high school could have. See “Experts in Horticulture Talk on School Gardens,” *Boston Sunday Post* (December 16, 1906), p. 4, and George H. Martin, “School Gardens in the Public Schools of Massachusetts,” reprinted from the *Sixty-Ninth Report of the State Board of Education*, January 1906.

71 Report of the Lectures on the Preservation of Wild Flowers, Letter to Dr. N.L. Britton by Charles Louis Pollard, Secretary-Treasurer of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America, *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*, Vol. VIII, No. 92 (August 1907): 193–196.

72 “1915” *Boston Exposition: Official Catalogue and Year Book*, p. 58. The exposition was held in the “Old Art Museum” in Copley Square, November 1–27, 1909.

73 “Boston, Various Notes” in *The Weekly Florists’ Review: A Journal for Florists, Seedsmen and Nurserymen*, Vol. XXV, No. 628 (December 9, 1909), p. 38. Among other professional activities and contributions, Craig served the Massachusetts Horticulture Society as a trustee.

74 “The Protection of Native Plants,” *The Guide to Nature, Special Connecticut Shore Number*, published by the Agassiz Association, Vol. IV, No. 2 (June 1911): 66.

75 Robert T. Jackson, "Protect the Native Plants," under "Notes and Correspondence," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (January 1913): 204.

76 "Do Not Uproot the Wild Flowers," *The Guide to Nature, Guidance for August*, publication of The Agassiz Association, Vol. VII, No. 3 (July 1914): 126.

77 Reports of the Wild Flower Committees of the Member Clubs of The Garden Club of America: Connecticut Zone, *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, (May 1921), p. 11. Miss Amy Folsom, Society for Protection of Native Plants, Boston, is listed as a member of an advisory committee along with Mrs. N.L. Britton, American Society for the Preservation of Wild Flowers [sic] (Bronx Park, New York), and Mrs. F.C. Farwell, the chairman of the GCA's national wild flower committee.

78 This feature on Merritt L. Fernald is drawn from the following sources:

Elmer D. Merrill, "Merritt Lyndon Fernald, 1875-1850: A Biographical Memoir," National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC (1954): 45-98.

Memorial essays in *Rhodora*, Vol. 53, No. 626 (February 1951):

Harley Harris Bartlett, "Fernald as a Reviser of *Gray's Manual*," pp. 44-55

J.M. Fogg, Jr., "Fernald as a Teacher," pp. 39-45

Ludlow Griscom, "Fernald in the Field," pp. 61-65

A.S. Pease, "Merritt Lyndon Fernald," pp. 33-39.

R.C. Rollins, "Fernald as a Botanist," pp. 56-61.

R.C. Rollins, "Merritt Lyndon Fernald, 1873-1950," *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (May-June 1951): 270-272.

Harvard University Herbaria, Merritt Lyndon Fernald (1873-1950) "Papers, Finding Aid," Library of the Gray Herbarium Archives.

79 Miss Carter's death was reported in the *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the Year 1915, Part I*, p. 241. Miss Carter had joined the Society in 1867, and had been a frequent exhibitor of native plants.

80 Letters from Amy Folsom and Margaret E. Allen in the archives of the Native Plant Trust.

It is fortunate that the Society for the Protection of Native Plants did not merge with the Wild Flower Society of America. By 1924, the other organization restricted its focus to New York State, and in 1933, officially dissolved, as it was determined that the Society's mission was effectively being carried on by others, including the GCA, various state federations of garden clubs, and a namesake institution based in Washington, DC, which itself ceased operating in 1965.

81 "The Society for the Protection of Native Plants," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society for the Protection of Birds*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (March 1920), p. 2.

82 "The Society for the Protection of Native Plants," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society for the Protection of Birds*, Vol. V, No. 2 (March 1921): 4-5. Another article with praise for the Society: Julia W. Wolfe, "Going, Going, Nearly Gone - Our Wild Flowers," *Popular Educator* (March 1922), p. 398.

83 A lawyer-entrepreneur and philanthropist, Mr. Burrage had a passion for plants and he used his wealth - derived from interests in utilities and mining - to encourage that love in others. In addition to his Massachusetts homes in Boston and Manchester by the Sea, Mr. Burrage enjoyed a winter home in Redlands, California, where Caroline and Olivia Phelps Stokes also had a home. (It was the Phelps gift to the New York Botanical Society that led to the founding of the New York-based Wild Flower Preservation Society.)

In 1921, Mr. Burrage became the first president of the newly founded American Orchid Society. In an article published three years later, Burrage discussed his work in transplanting and growing native New England orchids, ferns, and flowering shrubs. He wrote: "[T]he problem of preserving our native orchids is by far the hardest one to solve in the whole categories of native wild flowers." *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (November 1924): 31-33

84 "Ninety Years of Championing Natives" in the American Horticultural Society's monthly journal *American Horticulturist*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (February 1991) with a feature on the New England Wild Flower Society by Marty Carlock, "Recipes for Natives," pp. 18-24.

85 This historical background is drawn from various issues of the *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, 1916 into the 1920s.

In the May 1916 issue, "A Plea for the Wild Flowers" announced that a wild flower committee was being formed and that each member club had been asked to appoint a member to serve on it.

In May 1917, "Wild Flower Protection" was covered in an action statement by Beatrix Farrand and a committee report. Farrand had become an advocate for native plants in the 1890s, when she served an informal apprenticeship at the Arnold Arboretum with Charles Sprague Sargent, who encouraged use of native plants and respect for the natural landscape.

The January 1918 issue included an exposé of a seller who dug plants from the woods, and March 1919 for "Exhibition of Nature Studies of the Chicago Chapter of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America"

The June 1919 issue featured an essay entitled "Wild Gardening" by Gertrude Jekyll.

The May 1921 "Wild Flower Number" of the *Bulletin* presented reports from across the country: the Atlantic Zone (eight clubs from New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania clubs); the Central Zone (six clubs in Colorado, Illinois, and Ohio); the Connecticut Zone; the Massachusetts Zone; the Upper Southern Zone (eight clubs in Maryland, Pennsylvania); the Lower Southern Zone (two clubs in Virginia); the Texas Zone; and the Pacific Zone.

Mrs. Farwell's conclusion summarized the ideas and initiatives that had been proposed - pamphlets, seasonal exhibits in town public libraries, support of preserves (public and private), enlisting school children as members in nature leagues, signs in localities where flowers, plants, shrubs and trees were in special need of protection, an effort to assemble pictures, photographs and slides of wild flowers, as well as herbaria, talented lecturers who would speak in schools and neighborhood venues, and classes to excite interest.

As for the Massachusetts Committee, its first step was a meeting at Horticultural Hall on April 29, 1921, featuring a lecture by Mr. W.D. Richardson of Chicago on birds and flowers "to arouse public opinion." The committee's opinion was that "the best channel is through the children, whom we hope to reach by way of the schools and settlement houses, with interesting lectures and exhibitions." *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (May 1921): 12.

86 There were great hopes for Mrs. Crosby (1871-1957) when she assumed the presidency of the GCA. She was known for her love of flowers. Her beautiful gardens at *Apple Trees*, her Manchester shore cottage, were designed by William Ernestus Bowditch. See "Gilded Age of Manchester-by-the-Sea," Manchester Historical Society. A photograph of the estate's signature, blue ribbon-winning hornbeam hedge is featured in the *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Yearbook for 1935*.

Mrs. Crosby's resignation was announced in the May 1921 issue of the GCA's *Bulletin's* "Wild Flower Number." "Resignation of Mrs. Crosby," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 5 (May 1921): 3.

The GCA's centennial history says this of Mrs. Crosby: "Henrietta Marian [sic] Crosby served as president for less than a year, and even in that short time, much of her responsibility was handled by her first vice president [Mrs. Sloan]. Very suddenly she resigned and moved to Europe for an extended stay with family." William Seale, *The Garden Club of America: One Hundred Years of a Growing Legacy*, Smithsonian Books (2013), p. 20.

Mrs. Crosby's family situation was complicated. In 1920, her son Harry, who had served in the ambulance corps during World War I and was then at Harvard, scandalized Boston society by conducting a very public affair with Mrs. Richard R. (Polly) Peabody. In September 1922, after Mrs. Peabody's divorce, Harry and Polly (who assumed the name Caresse) married, and then moved to Paris, where they founded the Black Sun Press, an English language press that published the works of modernist authors of the day, including James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence. The Crosbys were at the heart of the expatriate Bohemian society of 1920s Paris – and they were outré even for that time and place, leading lives fueled by sex, champagne, opium, hashish, and cocaine. Then disaster in December 1929. Fascinated with death and suicide, Harry Crosby died in a murder-suicide or double-suicide with a young lover, also from a privileged Boston family and recently married. The bodies were discovered after Harry had failed to appear at a dinner with his mother and wife. The deaths, which took place in New York, were the subject of sensational press coverage. It is difficult to imagine how Mrs. Crosby continued her wild flower work, but continue she did.

See Geoffrey Wolff, *Black Sun: The Brief Transit and Violent Eclipse of Harry Crosby*. Originally published by Random House in 1976, Wolff's book was republished as a New York Review Books Classic in 2003. The book was recently included in the *Wall Street Journal's* "Five Best" series (Aaron Shulman, "Five Best: Literary Lives," *Saturday/Sunday*, August 24–25, 2019, p. C-8).

87 Annette LaMond, Interview with Edie Loening, GCA Historian, 2009.

88 The November meeting and the luncheon that followed is described by GCA secretary, Harriet Pratt, "An Informal Report of the Meeting held, at the Invitation of Mr. Albert

C. Burrage, President of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 4 (March 1922): 249–250.

89 "Wild Flower Preservation," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*, No. 9 (April 15, 1922): 45–48. The article addresses the pressure of development on woodland and marsh plants, the potential of wild flower gardens, sanctuaries, protective legislation, and education. In the conclusion, the bulletin's editor recommended that each locality establish its own "Wild Flower Committee or Club" – just what the Society for the Protection of Native Plants had set out to do two decades earlier. The article did not specifically mention the GCA, but Mrs. Farwell through her Wild Flower Committee was in fact attempting to create an ambitious national network of local clubs.

90 It could be difficult not to feel indignation, for example at the "transient visitor – the one who stops his car and gathers all the Cardinal flowers or Gentiens, or lovely Orchids, that were once so plentiful..." *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 5 (May 1922): 259.

91 "Wild Flower Department," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 4 (March 1922): 248–249.

92 "Wild Flower Preservation Department, 'The Zones,'" *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 5 (May 1922): 259.

93 During the exhibition, Mr. Burrage received the Horticultural Society's White Medal of Honor, putting him in the company of such luminaries as Charles S. Sargent, Jackson Dawson, E.H. Wilson and Louisa Yeomans King. The award was given in recognition of "his conspicuous services to horticulture by the establishment in Beverly, Mass., of the greatest collection of exotic orchids the New World has yet seen; by his skillful and energetic management of the affairs of the society; and by his labors to increase the love, protection and cultivation of New England wild flowers and ferns through his remarkable exhibition in Boston of these plants in the springs of 1921 and 1922." "White Medal of Honor," *The American Florist*, Vol. 58 (June 10, 1922): 1027; "White Medal Goes to A.C. Burrage," *Horticulture*, Vol. XXXV, No. 9 (May 10, 1922): 216. The subheading on his obituary read, "Cultivated Rare Orchids," "A.C. Burrage Dead; Boston Attorney," *New York Times* (June 30, 1931).

94 This description is an abridgment of the one provided by Mr. Craig in his review, "Great Exhibition of Wild Flowers and Ferns in Boston," *Gardeners' Chronicle (of America) A*

Horticultural Digest, Vol. XXVI, No. 5 (May 1922): 150. Further details of the exhibition are contained in "Wild Flower and Fern Show: Unique Exhibition Held in Boston and Largely Attended," *Horticulture*, Vol. XXXV, No. 9 (May 10, 1922): 217.

Mr. Craig was known to GCA members as a contributor to the organization's bulletin. Following the MHS exhibition, he became a favorite speaker with the Cambridge Plant Club, and addressed the group three times – in February 1924, April 1926, and March 1929.

95 An article in the May 1922 GCA *Bulletin* reported that the zone committee was planning lectures at the wild flower exhibition, but a flyer for the lecture series indicates that it was organized by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. This flyer is in the archives at Native Plant Trust. See also W.N. Craig, op. cit., and L.C. Breed, "New England, Correspondent, Wild Flower Exhibition," *The Seed World* (May 19, 1922): 44, 46.

96 "New England Wild Flower Preservation Society," *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Year Book for 1940*, p. 45. The flyer is on microfiche in the Frances Loeb Library at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

97 L.C. Breed, "New England Correspondent, Wild Flower Exhibition," *The Seed World*, Vol. 11, No. 10 (May 19, 1922): 44, 46. The society is also mentioned in *The Yearbook of the Society of American Florists and Ornamental Horticulturists, 1922–23*.

As noted, the article misreported the name of the society. It was not Society of the Protection of New England Plants, but rather Society for the *Preservation of Native New England Plants* (emphasis added).

98 Professor Jackson's talk was featured in the Boston press. Advocating for wild flower gardening, Jackson said, "To awaken an interest in and appreciation of native plants is the best way of protecting them and nothing gives a greater interest than cultivating them in our gardens." He noted that native plants had the horticultural advantage over common garden plants of succeeding best in shade. He noted species that were easily cultivated, and others that were not. Of the former, he spoke of a *Cypripedium calceolus* var. *pubescens* (large yellow lady-slipper) as being the easiest of native orchids, noting that he had one that had been growing in his garden and blooming reliably for nearly 40 years. His advice for success in cultivating native plants in the garden: Study the condition in which they grow wild and imitate them as far as possible. R.T. Jackson, "Wild Flora for Garden," *Boston Transcript*, May 6, 1922.

99 Fanny Day Farwell, "Wild Flower Committee," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, No. 6 (July 1922): 338–339. The report led off with the announcement that Mrs. Crosby, the New England Zone chairman, had started a "strong education campaign" at the recent MHS show, at which pamphlets of the *Society for the Protection of Native Plants* (note the original name) had been distributed. Mrs. Farwell was pleased to report the increase in membership produced by the exhibition, and also that the Society for the Protection of Native Plants was working with the GCA and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

100 This organization history is recounted in "New England Wild Flower Preservation Society," *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Year Book for 1940*, pp. 44–47.

The secretary hired by Mrs. Crosby was Miss Lilly S. Tobey, who stayed in the position for over 30 years, even after Mrs. Crosby retired. Miss Tobey's name appears in directories until the mid-1950s, as well as on assorted legislative petitions, e.g., advocating for protection for wild azaleas, wild orchids and cardinal flowers.

101 These pamphlets, issued by the Society for the Preservation of Native New England Plants, are dated 1922. Whether they were available at the MHS exhibition in May is unknown.

102 "Society for Preservation of Native Plants" in "Notes and Gleanings," *Old-Time New England: The Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities*, Volume XIII, No. 1 (July 1922): 44.

103 "Society for the Preservation of New England Plants," *Nature-Study Review*, Vol. 18, No. 7 (October 1922): 278–285. *Nature-Study Review's* cover advertised that it was "Devoted to Elementary Science in The Schools" as the Official Organ of the American Nature-Study Society. The first article in the issue made a strong statement for conservation and nature-studies in the public schools, described as a comparatively new branch of teaching (pp. 259–262). The issue also included poems – "Painted Trillium" was one, and photographs – "The Yellow Lady's Slipper" for example. Contributions from "Wild Flower Preservation Society of America" (pp. 268–69), and a plea on behalf of "Our Christmas Greens" by Beatrix Farrand, noted landscape architect and GCA member (pp. 270–71). The issue also included contributions from the New York-based Wild Flower Preservation Society.

A notice announcing the formation of the Society appeared in the garden journal, *Gardener's Chronicle of America*, Volume 27, No. 1 (January 1923): 22–23.

It is interesting to note that the *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* did not mention the new society in the Wild Flower features over the next two years.

104 This information is in the *Handbook of Scientific and Technical Societies and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, 1937, p. 170. A centennial publication of the New England Wild Flower Society gives the date of the name change as 1925.

105 In 1924, Mrs. Crosby assumed the leadership of the GCA Conservation Committee, which until then had been known as the Wild Flower Preservation Committee, and served until May 1929. Despite the name change, Mrs. Crosby continued to advocate for wild flowers within the GCA, and published a pamphlet, "Helpful Hints in Conserving Wild Flowers." (The original is in the GCA archives, along with a reprint from the early 1950s.)

A committed conservationist before the word was commonly used, she broadened the interests of the committee beyond wild flowers and Christmas greens. By the end of her term as Conservation Committee chair, Mrs. Crosby had encouraged the formation of conservation committees in 31 garden clubs in all 48 states and encouraged GCA headquarters to facilitate communication with the clubs and the public. Of note: not all of these clubs were GCA members.

It was Mrs. Crosby who encouraged Minerva Hamilton Hoyt of the GCA's Pasadena Garden Club in her advocacy on behalf of Joshua Tree National Monument. For that story, see Annette LaMond, "Minerva Hamilton Hoyt: Apostle of the Cacti," prepared for the Centennial of The Garden Club of America, 2013.

106 Mrs. Richardson's husband, an expert on wild-flower gardening, had served on Mrs. Crosby's first board of directors.

107 After the meeting, the club donated \$10 to the Society, and a member wrote a letter suggesting some revisions to the one of the Society's leaflets. Mrs. Crosby wrote a note of thanks on both counts that was read at a subsequent meeting.

108 See *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Yearbook for 1940*, p. 45. In 1938, the Society's speakers gave talks in 200 schools.

109 Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby, Treasurer and Chairman of the Board of Directors, "The New England Wild Flower Preservation Society" in *Old-Time New England: The Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities*, Vol XXI, No. 4 (April 1931): 182–184.

110 *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Yearbook for 1940*, op cit. The New England Wild Flower Society's centennial publication follows this article in referring to "a small group" as having come together. See *New England Wild Flower 100 Years: Conservation Notes of the New England Wild Flower Society* (2001): 3.

111 Was the Society for the Protection of Native Plants the first of its kind? Yes, it seems so, in the United States. But C. Stuart Gager, an early scholar of the wild flower conservation movement, believed that the first society dedicated to the cause was established in England in 1884 by a Mrs. Ewing, who named the organization the Parkinson Society, after the author of *Paradisus Terrestris*, the first work in English to describe garden plants alone. The stated objects of this society were "to search out and cultivate old garden flowers, to plant waste places with hardy flowers, and to prevent extermination." See C. Stuart Gager, "Elizabeth G. Britton and the Movement for the Preservation of Native American Wild Flowers," *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden*, Vol 41, No. 486 (June 1940): 139. There may have been earlier groups interested in plant protection on the Continent, particularly in the Alps.

112 *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (July 1936): 37–38.

113 "Conservation Award for Mrs. S.V.R. Crosby," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (March 1938): 126.

114 Mrs. Richardson succeeded Mrs. Crosby in January 1948. See *28th Annual Report of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society, Inc., January 1, 1948 – December 31, 1948*. She, too, was a member of a GCA club, and had served as chairman of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club's conservation committee. See *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (January 1940): 141.

Mrs. Richardson's name and the name of her successor were omitted from a list of the Society's presidents around 1995. This error was introduced into the records when a chronology of the Society's history was prepared for an exhibition. (See document entitled, "HISTORY/WORKUP FOR EXHIBITION") Those notes state inaccurately that, in 1948, after Mrs. Crosby retired, "Kathryn ('Kitty') Taylor takes over as president." Unfortunately, the compiler missed an accurate chronology prepared by longtime administrator, Persis Green, as well as the Society's annual report for 1948.

115 Mrs. Richardson's garden was a joint project with her husband, Henry Hyslop Richardson (1879–1933), the son of the architect Henry Hobson Richardson. He, too, was an avid native plant gardener. In his Harvard Class of 1895 20th Reunion Report (June 1915), Richardson wrote, "I have become very much interested in horticulture, especially of the wild American flora; and during my vacations I have taken many interesting journeys with this as a main incentive." In his 25th Reunion Report (June 1920), he notes his continued interest in horticulture and wild American flora, and reported that he had "made in Brookline [Cottage Street] an arboretum of the most attractive plants indigenous to the United States. The collection of the rarer specimens has led me into many interesting untraveled places, especially in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina; here at an altitude of 4000 feet I have purchased a tract of the primeval forest, where the largest trees in eastern North America are to be found..." Among his memberships, he listed the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and New England Botanical Club. In 1924, he received a gold medal for his wild flower garden from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, presumably after the class report deadline. See *Massachusetts Horticultural Society Annual Report for the Year 1920*, p. 13.

At its 12-year mark, the Richardsons' garden in Chestnut Hill was described in a feature article in *The Christian Science Monitor*, "Ravine Made into Garden Wins Horticultural Prize" (November 28, 1924). The garden site began as in a "tangled, neglected ravine full of tall trees and briars... an acre and a half of botanical rubbish." Mr. Richardson had begun work in 1912 by setting out 43,000 ferns, including all the native species. The goal was to prevent the banks from washing out. Over time, he removed ferns for herbaceous plants collected from around the country. Sections of the garden were designated for plants from the West, the South (particularly the Appalachian Mountains), and New England. The garden was described as a "treasure house" of rare plants.

116 "Juliet Richardson Kellogg French: The Girl with the Magic Lantern," *100 Years, New England Wild Flower: Conservation Notes of the New England Wild Flower Society* (2001).

117 Mrs. Jackson, a Vassar College graduate (Class of 1912), was a generation younger than Mrs. Richardson. And like many garden club women, she was involved in highway beautification work, in the 1940s with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts and

the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society; after her term as NEWFPS president, she served on a Federal highway commission in the 1950s.

Mrs. Jackson's conservation work is recorded in GCA bulletins of the 1940s. She spoke to other clubs regularly. In April 1949, Mrs. Jackson attended a Plant Club meeting with Mrs. Luis J. Francke, a GCA director and well-known conservationist.

118 Members of the Chestnut Hill Garden Club were great supporters of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society – undoubtedly thanks in part to the encouragement of Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Jackson. Among the notable supporters were legendary Chestnut Hill gardeners – the Clement Houghtons (whose rock garden is now on the Registry of Historic Places) and the Edwin Websters.

119 Mrs. Jackson had a second home in New Hampshire, first in Dublin (Stonewall Farm) and then in Peterborough. In fact, by a somewhat astonishing coincidence, Mrs. Jackson came to own the Peterborough home where Robert T. Jackson (no relation), president of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, had once gardened. Owned by a succession of avid gardeners, the garden, Pineview, was documented in 1999 for the Smithsonian's Archives of American Gardens

According to Mrs. Jackson's grandson, former New Hampshire congressman Charles Bass, and granddaughter Kitty Bass Cloud, Mrs. Jackson thoroughly enjoyed *Horticulture* – a magazine that she felt was terribly underpriced! Interview with Annette LaMond, September 2019.

120 Sources of biographical information on Kathryn Sears Taylor (née Kathryn Sears Park), 1895–1986, include: "People Portrait: Kathryn 'Kitty' Taylor," *New England Wild Flower, 100 Years: Conservation Notes of the New England Wild Flower Society*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (2001): 16; "Kathryn Sears Taylor," *International Who's Who, Monthly Supplement* 1951, p. 859; Thelma K. Hewitt, "Kathryn S. Taylor: A Remembrance," New England Wild Flower Society archives; John Thomas Fitzpatrick, "Cultivating and Preserving American Wild Flowers, 1890–1965," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2006.

121 Mrs. Taylor's books included *Winter Flowers in the Sun-heated Pit* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941), co-authored with Cambridge Garden Club member, Edith W. Gregg; *A Traveler's Guide to Roadside Flowers, Shrubs and Trees of the U.S.* (Farrar,

Straus and Company, 1949), edited by Mrs. Taylor, describing over 700 plants in flower, published under the auspices of The Garden Club of America and the National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc., with drawings by Dorothy Falcon Platt (a charter member of the GCA) and Dorothy Lincoln Park; *Handbook of Wild Flower Cultivation*, with Stephen F. Hamblin (Macmillan, 1963), published under the auspices of the New England Wild Flower Preservation Society with over 200 drawings of wild flowers by Cambridge Garden Club member Catherine R. Hammond and a bibliography developed by Persis R. Green; *Gardening with Potted Plants*; and finally, "Propagating House Plants by Cuttings" with Thomas Hoffmann, *Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record* (1984).

122 Mrs. Taylor's experiments with pit-gardening, modeling her pit on winter storage pits used by nurserymen for dormant plants, but her innovation was to develop techniques for blossoming ones. She and her Cambridge collaborator, Mrs. Gregg, devoted themselves to expanding plants to the original list that could be grown in pits. Several members of Plant Club installed sun pits. When I joined the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club in 1987, at least one "pit" inspired by Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Gregg was still in active use. It belonged to Lizanne Chapin, one of the club's great propagators, a longtime volunteer at the Arnold Arboretum.

123 In May 1973, the CP&GC was proud to show the urban wild flower garden of Mrs. James B. Munn to delegates to the GCA Zone I Meeting. A photo taken on the visit appears in the *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (September 1973): 66. Sadly, in the late 1970s, the house with its large lot was sold to a developer and a cluster of townhouses was built where wild flowers once thrived.

124 For more on the immense organizational effort that went into the guidebook, see Kathryn S. Taylor, "The Automobile Guidebook," *Bulletin of The Garden Club of America* (July 1947): 61–62.

125 Mrs. Taylor's Massachusetts Horticultural Society course is described in the annual reports for 1954 section of the Society's 1955 *Yearbook*. "[Mrs. Lucien B. Taylor] taught several classes in the afternoon and evening which were highly successful and well attended. Each course consisted of 5 two-hour meetings at Horticultural Hall, plus a field trip to her greenhouse and pit garden in Dover."

In 1976, when Mrs. Taylor was over 80 years old, the Noanett Garden Club made the Taylors' garden – “long a source of joy and learning for garden club members and for the public” – a club project in her honor.

126 Mrs. Crosby's niece, Ruth Grew Cutter was a formidable horticulturist. Her horticultural legacy lives on in Cambridge, notably in the nearly 60-year-old yew hedges at the Cambridge Historical Society. Mrs. Cutter and her sister, Esther Grew Parker, propagated the yews and re-spaced them as they filled out.

127 Catherine Hammond created three charts for the Society: “Poisonous Plants” (1961); “Mushrooms” (1968); and “Twenty-Five Wild Flowers of the Roadsides and Fields of New England” (1974). Records of Native Plant Trust.

128 Annette Cottrell was legendary as a conservationist in Cambridge and New Hampshire. She was an activist and a key figure in dozens of state and local environmental organizations in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, including the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, the New Hampshire Environmental Coalition, the New Hampshire Committee for Better Water. Her efforts were critical in the establishment of the Odiorne State Park and the Seacoast Science Center. Her papers (1941–1991) are at the University of New Hampshire. See Annette B. Cottrell with Richard Ober, *Off We Go A Memoir of a 20th-Century Activist* (1998) Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

129 Barbara B. Paine co-edited the Society's first magazine, *Wildflower*, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s. Records of Native Plant Trust.

130 A partial list of Mrs. Taylor's awards: The GCA awarded her its Distinguished Service Medal in 1955. She was an Honorary Member of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and a recipient of its Gold Medal (1978), Gold Medal for a Four-Season Garden (1967), and the Thomas Roland Medal (1958). For the Trustees, she served on committees overseeing Medfield's Rhododendron Swap and Sherborn's “Gates of the Charles” – Rocky Narrows. For the National Council of State Garden Clubs, she served as horticultural chairman.

131 Stephen F. Hamblin (1884–1964) had taught horticulture and botany at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, retiring around 1950. He had been director of Harvard's Botanic Garden in the 1920s at the unhappy time that the garden was being starved of funding by the university. After the garden closed in 1929, Hamblin founded the Lexington (MA) Botanic Garden which he visualized as a center of practical horticulture. The motto: “To grow, test and display all hardy herbaceous plants.” Aspects of the operation anticipated the New England Wild Flower Society's Garden in the Woods and Nasemi Farms, but the Depression years were challenging and then World War II took its toll. Later, it became the site of a nursery known as Lexington Gardens and a location for WGBH's “The Victory Garden.” For a history, see the Lexington Historical Society. Also, “Lexington's Botanic Garden: Why are there planting beds on a wooded hillside? *Lexington Patch*, by Meg Muckenhoupt, September 10, 2010.

Books by Hamblin include *Lists of Plant Types for Landscape Planting* (1923), *Book of Garden Plans* (1916), *American Rock Gardens* (1931),

Man's Spiritual Contact with the Landscape (1923), *Identifying Plants without a Key* (1919), *The Plan for the Harvard University Botanic Garden* (1924), and a series of informational pamphlets about perennials known as the Lexington leaflets.

132 Barbara B. Paine, “The New England Wild Flower Society Campaigns to Preserve Garden in the Woods.” *Horticulture* (October 1964): 31–35. Mrs. Paine began covering the Society for the *Boston Globe* in the early 1960s, writing enthusiastically about its events. She and Mrs. Taylor also co-authored educational articles for the *Globe*. One example: “Best Showy Plants Listed for Wild-Flower-Garden Beginners,” *Boston Globe*, April 1, 1962, p. A61.

133 Annette LaMond, Interviews with Pat Pratt, 2009 and 2019. For example, Mrs. Ross opened her Manchester garden at the venue for a luncheon to the benefit of the Society. “One North Shore: 10 Gardens in Tour,” *Boston Globe*, May 19, 1968, p. 76B.

134 The Society's list of Administrators of the Society for the Protection of Native Plants also requires amendment. Miss Folsom was the society's *second* treasurer, not the first. Further, three women had secretarial responsibilities, 1901–1922. Note the following corrections for those years:

Maria E. Carter, Secretary, 1901–1915

Margaret E. Allen, Corresponding Secretary, 1904–1922

Ruth R. Edwards, Secretary, 19__?–1922

Margaret Warren, Treasurer, 1902–190_?

Amy Folsom, Treasurer, 190_?–1922

About the Author

A member of the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club since 1987, Annette LaMond has served as the club's president and chaired its awards, civic planting and membership committees. When she joined the club, members were preparing to celebrate its centennial. She emerged from the experience as the club's historian – a responsibility that has become her passion, opening windows on women's history in Cambridge and beyond.

Her publications for the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club include anniversary time lines and essays. For the Cambridge Historical Society's centennial, she wrote an essay entitled "What's in a Name? or Is This the First Garden Club?" about a controversy between the Plant Club and a garden club in Georgia. She is currently writing histories of the Plant Club and its younger "sister," the Garden Club, before the two clubs merged in 1965.

An avid ice skater, Ms. LaMond has written a history of the Cambridge Skating Club, and also served as its president. A current interest, arising from research on the history of Cambridge parks, is advocacy for reclaiming and improving open space in her city.

A graduate of Wellesley College, Ms. LaMond holds a Ph.D. in economics from Yale University as well as an S.M. in management from MIT.

Front cover:

Wild Columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*,
illustration by Isaac Sprague in George L.
Goodale's *Wild Flowers of America* (1882).

Back cover:

The Plant World was a monthly journal
of popular and general botany, published
1897–1919.

Vol. VI

MAY, 1903

No. 5

The
**PLANT
WORLD**

AN
ILLUSTRATED
MONTHLY JOURNAL
OF
POPULAR BOTANY

Founded 1897
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE
WILD FLOWER PRESERVATION
SOCIETY
OF AMERICA

THE PLANT WORLD COMPANY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The cover features a dark brown background with a white border. The title 'The PLANT WORLD' is prominently displayed in a stylized font. Below the title, a central oval contains text identifying it as an illustrated monthly journal of popular botany, founded in 1897, and the official organ of the Wild Flower Preservation Society of America. The cover is adorned with various botanical illustrations, including flowers, leaves, and a small globe at the bottom left. The publisher's name and location are printed at the bottom of the central text area.

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